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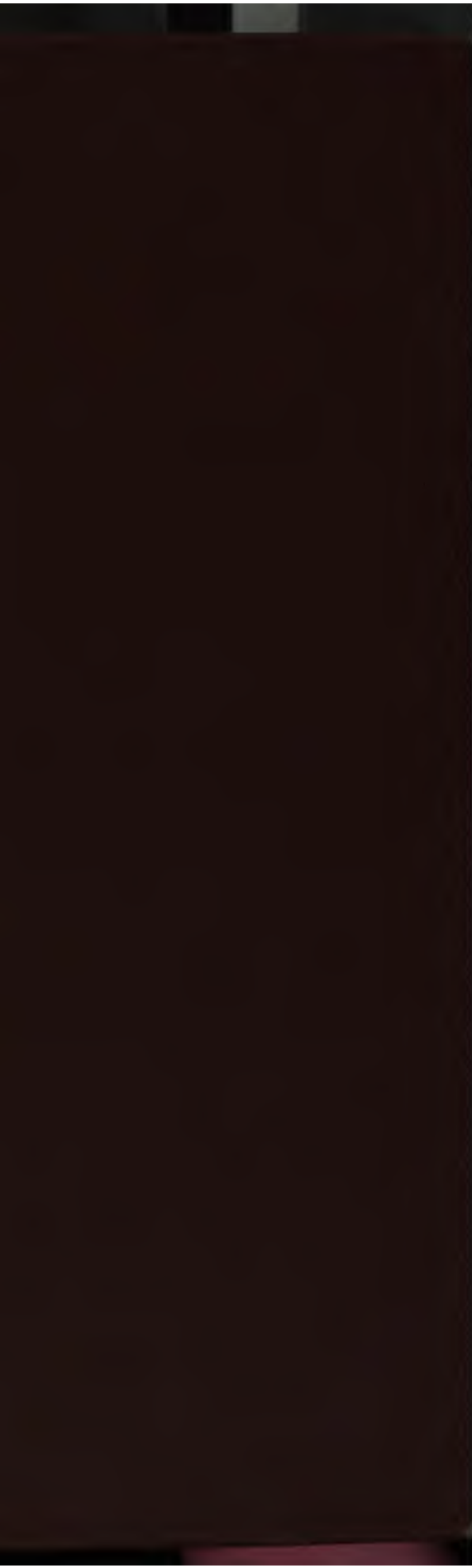
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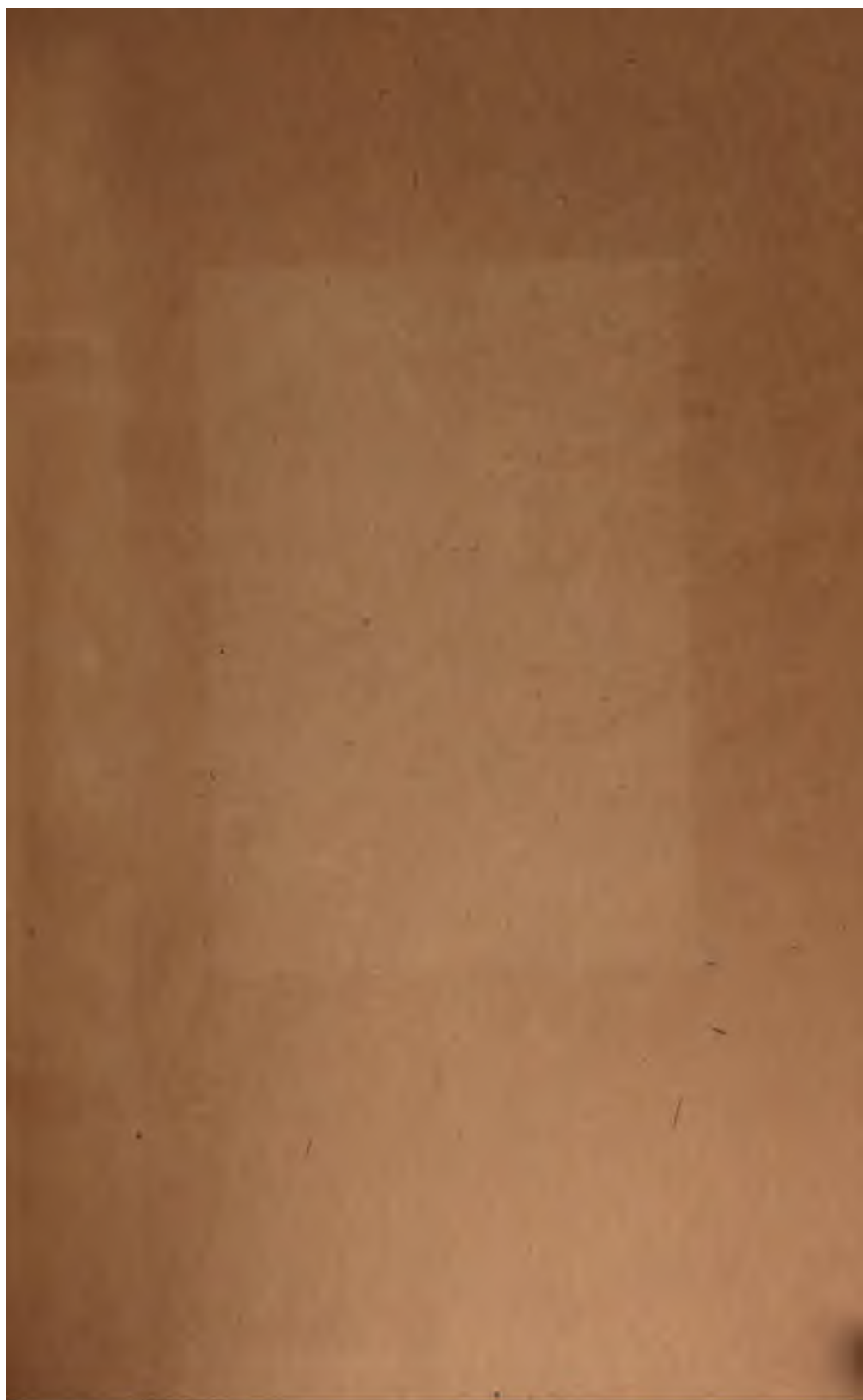
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CORNELL STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

No 4.

THE ETHICAL ASPECT
OF
LOTZE'S METAPHYSICS

BY

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CHAPTER I.

LOTZE'S PHILOSOPHICAL MOTIVES AND PRE-SUPPOSITIONS.

IN closing his earliest philosophical work, the *Metaphysik* of 1841, Lotze gave expression to the conviction that the true beginning of metaphysics lies in ethics. After nearly forty years of philosophical activity, he re-affirmed this conviction in the closing words of the *Metaphysik* of 1879, the latest of his works published during his lifetime. The expression, he admits, is not exact, but he still feels certain of being in the right in seeking the ground of that which *should* be in that which *is*.¹ He further expresses the hope that what may seem unacceptable in this view may be justified in a future work. Unfortunately, his death, in July, 1881, prevented the appearance of the third and last division of his *System der Philosophie*, which was to have treated of the philosophy of religion, morals, and æsthetics. The little volumes of outlines from his lecture-notes in part make good this loss, yet Lotze's system must remain incomplete, and that too in what is, in a certain sense, the keystone of the structure. It is the writer's aim in what follows to show not merely that Lotze's system is pervaded by his ethical views, and by æsthetic ideals scarcely to be distinguished from ethical, but rather to show that his most characteristic metaphysical doctrines grow out of ethical conceptions, that these conceptions are an essential factor in his metaphysics, that without them his speculative theory of the universe lacks both completeness and coherence.

Perhaps we can find no better way of approach to our subject than to consider in brief what were the motives which impelled Lotze to the study of philosophy, what were the conditions of the time which gave direction to his thought, and what the ideals which inspired it. Philosophy is always a piece of life, as Lotze himself has said,² and thought can not be divorced from the per-

¹ *Met.*, *Schluss*, p. 604.

² *Kl. Schr.*, 3, p. 455.

sonality of the thinker. We shall find this inquiry the more fruitful for the reason that we are not left to conjecture on these points, or limited to the bare facts of Lotze's life, but have access to a somewhat full and frank confession from his own pen.¹

Born² May 21, 1817, in Bautzen, Saxony, Lotze was a compatriot of Lessing and the elder Fichte, a fact in which he felt much pleasure. He was the son of a physician, and determined in early youth to follow his father's profession. While very young he was brought by his parents to Zittau, and it was here that he received his early education. The gymnasium at Zittau was an old institution and under able direction. Its corps of teachers included men distinguished for scholarship, and the comparatively small number of pupils was favorable for careful instruction. It is remarked by Rehnisch that the fact that Lotze translated the *Antigone* of Sophocles into Latin, in an elegant and masterly manner and for the purpose of recreation, twenty years after leaving this school, comments favorably upon the thoroughness of the instruction he received there.³ In the register of the gymnasium at Zittau it is recorded of Lotze that "he studied philosophy and the physical sciences."⁴

In his reply to I. H. Fichte, Lotze says that it was a strong inclination to poetry⁵ and art which first led him to study philosophy; and unto the end of his life the spectacle of the world was for him 'everywhere wonders and poetry.'⁶ It was a happy fortune indeed by which the poetic temperament was combined in Lotze with a taste and aptitude for the sciences. Keenly sensitive to the beauty of the world and to the moral import of life, his acute and analytic mind must needs explain and systema-

¹ Philosophy in the last Forty Years, *Contemp. Rev.*, Jan., 1880. Reprinted in *Kleine Schriften*, vol. 3.

² I have made use of an admirable brief sketch of Lotze's life written by E. Rehnisch, a colleague of Lotze's at Göttingen: "Hermann Lotze, sa vie et ses écrits," *Revue Philosophique*, 1881.

³ *Rev. Ph.*, 1881, p. 322.

⁴ *Rev. Ph.*, 1881, p. 322.

⁵ It may not be known to all the readers of Lotze that among his earliest works was a little volume of poems, published in 1840. See Wm. Wallace: *Lectures and Essays*, p. 488. Kronenberg: *Moderne Philosophen*, pp. 50-55.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 623.

tize. Speculative and practical demands were alike urgent upon him ; experience must be sifted, explained, and unified, in order to the justification and satisfaction of the ideals of the speculative no less than those of the practical reason. This keen speculative interest gave Lotze his bent towards scientific study and made of him a philosopher in place of a poet.

Lotze entered the University at Leipzig at the age of seventeen, with the purpose of studying medicine. In the courses preparatory to his medical studies he had for his teachers E. H. Weber, Volkmann, and Fechner, while at the same time he came under the influence of Weisse, whose views on the subject of æsthetics, especially, had a lasting effect upon him. To his scientific training are due in large part, no doubt, that scrupulous caution, that painstaking care for details, and that reverence for facts which are so conspicuous in all Lotze's work. To quote from Rehnisch, "he will always be named among the masters who have made philosophy take 'the sure march of a science.'"¹ In later life, to be sure, Lotze's interest in science seemed somewhat to wane ; for when Darwin's theory was attracting the attention of all thinking men, it met with seeming indifference from him. That a man of scientific training should be so little impressed by a hypothesis of so great import for natural science is somewhat surprising. It may be, as von Hartmann suggests, that in his later years Lotze was prevented by weariness from busying himself with questions which for his personal assurance were finally settled.²

In March, 1838, Lotze obtained the degree of doctor of philosophy, and in July of the same year that of doctor of medicine. He returned to Leipzig as a member of the Faculty of Medicine in 1839, and a few months later became a member of the Faculty of Philosophy. He was made professor extraordinary at Leipzig in 1843, and in 1844 was called to Göttingen to fill the chair vacant since the death of Herbart. Though frequently called to other universities, Lotze remained at Göttingen until the spring of 1881, when he finally accepted a call to Berlin. He had but entered upon his work there when his death occurred

¹ *Riv. Ph.*, 1881, p. 336.

² *Lotze's Philosophie*, p. 42.

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in July of that year. His life was uneventful in incident, and his efforts were always in some measure restricted by ill health.

Pfleiderer divides Lotze's literary career into three periods.¹ These may be designated for convenience as the period of his scientific and early philosophical activity, the period of the *Mikrokosmos*, and of the *System der Philosophie*. During the first period (1840-1852) Lotze's activity was chiefly scientific, yet the early *Logik* (1841) and the early *Metaphysik* (1843) fall within this period, testifying to his interest in philosophical speculation, and anticipating not only the general direction which his later thought was to take, but many of the conclusions at which he later arrived. These earlier works seem to have made little impression upon his contemporaries, since his position as a thinker was very generally misunderstood. Moreover, the scientific works of this period are pervaded by a philosophical spirit, as is suggested by the titles even. Lotze's first work, *De futurae biologiae principibus philosophicis*, was a treatise presented for the degree of doctor of medicine. There followed a series of publications animated by one purpose, that of establishing the laws of mechanism as the principle of the scientific explanation of vital phenomena. The *Allgemeine Pathologie und Therapie als Mechanische Naturwissenschaften* appeared in 1842; *Lebenskraft*, in 1843; *Seele und Seelenleben* in 1846; *Allgemeine Physiologie des Körperlichen Lebens* in 1851; and the *Medicinische Psychologie oder Physiologie der Seele* in 1852.

It is noteworthy that the early period of Lotze's activity coincides in general with the transition to the new scientific era.² The day of practical modern invention had dawned, the era of steam, of electricity, of the arrogance of power vested in material things. The Idealism of Fichte and of Hegel seemed but a vision of the night-time which fades in the light of day. Materialistic theories were wide-spread and triumphant. Men turned from metaphysical speculation with distrust and hailed science as the god of the new day. But science was just emerging from an obscure past, and was as yet uncertain of its province and its methods,

¹ Lotze's *philosophische Weltanschauung*, pp. 7-9.

² See Kronenberg: *Moderne Philosophen*, pp. 8-10.

and was not a little hampered by tradition and prejudice. As a physician, Lotze first directed his efforts towards correcting and clarifying the physiological and medical science of his day. Physiology was at this time much dominated by Schelling's philosophy of nature. Schelling had sought to mediate between the mechanical explanation of nature and the old theory of a 'vital force,' but had virtually re-instated the latter as the necessary explanation of phenomena in the organic world. Furthermore, the relation of mind and body—a long-vexed problem for philosophy—had assumed a new urgency for medical science, which, in common with the other sciences of the day, was struggling after clearer conceptions of the facts and principles within its scope. Moreover, a new mental science, having little in common with the old psychology save the name, was just beginning to differentiate itself from the physical sciences, and rendered imperative an investigation of the relation between mental and cortical processes. In his scientific writings of this period Lotze aimed to prove once and for all the untenability of the 'vital force' theory as an explanation of the phenomena of living bodies. The body is a mechanism, he held; for the purposes of science its functions are wholly explicable by the mechanism of natural laws. Science need seek no ulterior explanation. The *Medicinische Psychologie*, a pioneer work of the new psychology, extends the principle of mechanism to explain the interaction of mind and body. For this Lotze coined the term 'physico-psychical' mechanism, but later gratefully accepted the less awkward phrase, 'psycho-physical,' an amendment suggested by Fechner.

Appearing at a time when materialism was in the ascendancy, it is not perhaps altogether surprising that the purport of Lotze's scientific writings was misunderstood. He was warmly welcomed by the materialists as a champion of that theory, while by many he was classed as a follower of Herbart. In his reply to I. H. Fichte,¹ Lotze denied both these assertions, referring to his published writings as affording ample refutation. Leaving the early philosophical works out of the question, the *Medicinische Psychologie* alone contains frequent and explicit state-

¹ *Streit-Schriften*, 1857.

ments as to the falsity and inadequacy of materialism as a metaphysical theory. Materialism is due to an apotheosis of natural science, Lotze declared;¹ in its desire for simplicity it seeks a false unity by ignoring the disparateness of physical and mental phenomena. In truth the last result of scientific analysis but serves to emphasize the sharp division between the two realms.² Indications are not lacking, even in these earlier writings, that Lotze looked upon the mechanical explanation of natural processes as by no means final. For science, indeed, the explanation is final; for the metaphysician it remains to explain the nature, origin, and meaning of mechanism itself.

The second period³ of Lotze's life is that marked by the appearance of the *Mikrokosmos*, in three volumes (1856, 1858, 1864). In this work Lotze sought to unite the two sides of one and the same *Weltanschauung*, to show "how absolutely universal is the extent, and at the same time how completely subordinate the significance, of the mission which mechanism has to fulfil in the world."⁴ It is now that Lotze definitely undertakes his life's labor as the vindicator of the ideal interpretation of life and nature against the materialistic drift of current thought. The task which he imposed upon himself was something more than a reconciliation of faith and knowledge⁵: He sought both to vindicate the reality of the spiritual needs of men, which find expression in religious beliefs and in moral and æsthetic ideals, and to determine their significance for metaphysics. Rehnisch remarks that one can easily guess that the idea of such a work as the *Mikrokosmos* dates back to Lotze's student days at Leipzig, when the æsthetic of Weisse, the physiology of Weber, and the physics of Fechner were taking deep root in his mind. The convictions of the *Mikrokosmos* were born of conflicts waged in earlier days.⁶

It is interesting to notice to how great an extent Lotze's work

¹ *Med. Psy.*, I, 1, § 3, p. 35.

² *Med. Psy.*, I, 1, § 5, pp. 55, 65.

³ To this period belongs also the *Geschichte der Aesthetik in Deutschland*, 1868.

⁴ *Mikr.*, XV.

⁵ Cf. von Hartmann: *Lotze's Philosophie*, p. 45.

⁶ *Rtv. Ph.*, 1881, p. 331.

was that of mediation between widely opposed theories. For such a service he had unusual qualifications both by nature and by training. Not only did he seek to show that there is no conflict between the scientific and the philosophical views of the world, but within the field of metaphysics his office was that of reconciliation. When Lotze entered upon his philosophical career he found two rival theories, bitterly antagonistic, contesting the field. Empiricism, to be sure, had for the time being the better of the conflict; it had the greater following and received the popular plaudits. But Idealism was not dead; on the contrary, it showed at times a latent energy that disconcerted its foes. Lotze was both an empiricist and an idealist: an empiricist in his reverence for facts and his insistence that experience must be the starting-point of speculation, an idealist in his interpretation of the empirical order. Thus he was quick to see both the strength and the weaknesses of either metaphysical theory. Throughout his work we find this union of empiricism and idealism, sometimes to the clarifying of thought and sometimes to its confusion.

The third and last period is that in which Lotze purposed to present his system of philosophy in completed form, the comprehensive view of God, nature, and man, which was the fruit of the thought and labor of a life-time. The first two parts only of the projected work were completed—the *Logik* appearing in 1874, and the *Metaphysik* in 1879. The third part—the practical philosophy—was left unfinished at the death of the author.

In the article to which reference has been made above,¹ Lotze states the philosophical ideals, or 'prejudices,' as he frankly terms them, with which he entered upon his work. "When I began my philosophical studies the predominant opinion was still that to which Fichte has given the distinctest expression, that no theory of the world should pass for truth and science which was unable to explain all the particular parts of the world's history as independent consequences of a single general principle."²

¹ *Philosophy in the last Forty Years.*

² *Kl. Schr.*, 3, p. 451.

Bred in the traditions of the Hegelian school, Lotze goes on to say, he never ceased to keep hold of the element of truth which Fichte's assertion seemed to him to contain. At the same time, this assertion seemed to Lotze to efface an important distinction, namely, that between the all-comprehensive system of the universe and our human insight into this system. As to the universe itself, he felt no hesitation in presupposing this unity; but the task of deducing the manifold out of a single fundamental principle, he believed to be too great for the finite intelligence. Only a spirit standing in the center of the universe which he himself had made "could, with the knowledge of the final aim which he had given to his creation, make all the parts of it pass before him in the majestic succession of an unbroken development."¹ We finite beings at the circumference of the circle can hope to acquire only an approximate knowledge of the system; it must be by a *regressive* investigation that philosophy may seek to discover what is the living principle in the construction and course of the world.² The universe is indeed one, Lotze would seem to say, the self-realization of one ultimate and immanent principle; but the finite mind may well prove incapable of deducing the many from the One, of showing the logical relation of the parts to the whole and the necessary development therefrom.

The unity of things, in the sense thus guarded, is then one of the 'prejudices' with which Lotze set out upon the philosophical current of his youth. The other finds expression in the conviction that "intellectual life is more than thought."³ Here again Lotze attacks the Hegelian dialectic. Philosophy has erred in over-rating thought; knowledge is "not the sole portal through which that which constitutes the essence of real existence can enter into connection with the mind. . . . Much goes on within us which even our thinking intelligence follows and contemplates only from without, and whose peculiar contents it cannot exhaustively represent either in the form of an idea, or though a union of ideas."⁴ Even he who is boldly confident that nothing is impenetrable to the mind, cannot be equally con-

¹ *Kl. Schr.*, 3, p. 452.

² *Kl. Schr.*, 3, p. 453.

³ Cf. *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 611-612.

⁴ *Ibid.*

fidant in assuming that "thought is the precise organ which will be able to comprehend the real in its innermost essence."¹ On the contrary, Lotze believes, the mind would always find that the objects with which it occupies itself, and especially the highest principle of all, contain matter over and above that which is capable of being apprehended in the form of thought, even if the mind was quite perfect as an instrument of intellectual apprehension. Not only so, but the unity of all reality may be organized on a plan not demonstrable by logical laws, it may be impossible to arrange its members in logical order. For instance, the unity of a melody is not less real and organic to the musical composition because it does not lend itself to logical proof and arrangement. "The world is certainly not so constituted," Lotze maintains, "that the individual, fundamental truths which we find dominating in it hang together according to the poor pattern of a logical superordination, coördination, and subordination."² There will be occasion later to discuss Lotze's objections to Hegelianism, and the merit of his contention. The revolt against what he deemed an overweening intellectualism is one of the characteristic notes in Lotze's writings.

These two ideas, then—the unity of all reality and that life is more than thought—are the convictions with which Lotze began the study of philosophy. In stating them he affirms his belief that "except in rare cases, a prolonged philosophical labor is nothing else but the attempt to justify scientifically a fundamental view of things which has been adopted in early life."³

The question now arises, In what degree are these ideas ethical in content? But this question suggests another: In how far does Lotze distinguish ethical from æsthetic ideas? On this point, as on many others, the student of Lotze's system is baffled by an absence of careful definition, and accurate and consistent use of terms. This defect is especially noticeable in the field of the practical philosophy, where it is at the same time

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Kl. Schr.*, 3, p. 479. Cf. also pp. 472, 474.

³ *Kl. Schr.*, 3: p. 455.

more mischievous, since such terms as the Good, the Beautiful, Value, and the like, belonging as they do to the vocabulary of everyday life, are more vague in their meaning than are the technical terms of metaphysics and logic. Lotze nowhere carefully distinguishes the ethical from the æsthetic; he nowhere concisely defines what he means by the good or the beautiful. He not infrequently uses the term 'æsthetic' in a sense but little removed from its primary meaning, that is, as pertaining to the sensibilities and thus including both the ethical and the æsthetic feelings. It is evidently in this sense that Lotze uses the word when he says that the metaphysical reasons for believing in the unity of Being have been reinforced by 'æsthetic inclinations' which have yielded a prejudice as to the nature of this Being.¹ Again he speaks of the connection of the elements of the world in an 'æsthetic unity' of purpose or meaning.² It is in this sense too, I think, that we must interpret the 'æsthetic' faith in the validity of logical principles, which he posits.³ The interpretation of the term as including ethical as well as æsthetic sentiment is less obviously necessary, perhaps, in the last two cases cited than in the first; yet 'æsthetic' in the ordinary sense of the term is quite evidently inadequate to express Lotze's meaning here.⁴

The beautiful and the good Lotze classes together as ideas of worth or value: "We can conceive of the 'beautiful' and the 'happy' or 'blessedness' as united with the Good into one complex of all that has value."⁵ It will be necessary later to ascertain as nearly as possible what Lotze means by the good and by value. For our present purpose it suffices to say that the good subjectively is the 'blessedness' of sensitive beings; objectively it is some end to be realized.⁶ The beautiful as well as the good has a subjective significance in the happiness its contemplation gives, and an objective significance in adaptation

¹ *Met.*, § 84.

² *Met.*, § 195.

³ *Logik*, § 364.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 272-273; *Phil. of Relig.*, § 4; *Pract. Phil.*, § 7.

⁵ *Outl. of Met.*, § 92.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 614-717; *Outl. of Met.*, § 92; *Phil. of Relig.*, §§ 66, 67.

to an end.¹ In our attempts to analyze experience, we arrive at three irreducible elements—universal laws or necessarily valid truths, immediately given facts of reality, and determinations of worth.² Our universe cleaves apparently into these three realms of Truth, Reality, and Worth. It is Lotze's belief that the Infinite Reality "unfolds itself in one movement which for finite cognition appears in the three aspects of the good which is its end, the constructive impulse by which this is realized, and the conformity to law with which this impulse keeps in the path that leads towards its end."³ Beauty is defined by Lotze rather vaguely as an appearance to immediate intuition of a unity of these three factors or realms which cognition is unable completely to unite.⁴ Only in the totality of the world can we presuppose a perfect congruity of the three; but wherever in a single phenomenon the parts act harmoniously towards the realization of an end, in accordance with laws not imposed upon them from without but immanent in them as a spontaneous and joyous activity, that object we term *beautiful*. It is beautiful because 'it repeats in a picture that we can intuit' the general idea of Beauty—the 'perfect, reciprocal involution' of the realms of Truth, Reality, and Worth.⁵

It is evident that no sharp distinction can be made between the good and the beautiful on the basis of the principles here laid down. Both denote that which has worth, on the subjective side for the sensitive beings within the range of whose experience they come, on the objective side in an end which conforms to the world-aim. The good is a higher category than the beautiful, we are told;⁶ it is not in and of itself also beautiful, but first becomes beautiful in the course of its actualization. In the final result of synthesis the Good is the supreme principle, the highest and sole Reality.⁷ The beautiful is good in that and

¹ *Outl. of Æsthetics*, §§ 6, 7, 16.

² *Mikr.*, 3: p. 461; Cf. *Outl. of Æs.*, § 8.

³ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 616.

⁴ *Outl. of Æs.*, §§ 9, 14.

⁵ *Outl. of Æs.*, §§ 10, 14, 23.

⁶ *Outl. of Æs.*, § 11.

⁷ *Mikr.*, 3: 615, 623.

so far as it is beautiful, for in just this measure it epitomizes in concrete form the complete and perfect Idea of the Good which is also the Idea of Beauty.

To return to the question previously raised: In how far are the two pre-suppositions which Lotze, by his own confession, brought to the study of philosophy, ethical in their content? There is abundant proof that Lotze's unitary conception of the world was at least influenced in large measure by ethical considerations. The citations from the *Metaphysik* and the *Logik* indicate how constantly the ethical problem is present to his thought. Ethical considerations are for him bound up with those that are religious and æsthetic as well. Lotze is wont to group all these together as pertaining to spiritual needs, to the demands of the heart as over against those of the speculative reason.¹ In the *Metaphysik* Lotze expressly asserts that his doctrine of the unity of the world-ground rests upon a purely speculative basis, while at the same time he confesses himself not to be indifferent to the religious interests involved in such a conception.² But while the strictly metaphysical aspect of the problem may admit of proof, or of a rational apprehension which approximates to proof, the essential unity of the three realms of truth, reality, and worth under the concept of the Good is an ideal of the practical reason which the speculative reason is unable completely to vindicate or to explain.³ It is 'reason appreciative of worth' that affirms the unity of the Supreme Principle which realizes itself in all that is. That the universe should be *one*, one in purpose and in harmony, is an ethical no less than an æsthetic or religious demand.

It is a principle of Lotze's epistemology, constantly reiterated, that the truth which is necessary for thought is valid for the reality to which thought applies it.⁴ The ethical instinct in Lotze makes it an incredible notion to him "that the universe should be split in two in such a way that the whole intel-

¹ See *Intro.* to *Mikr.*; *Intro.* to *Ph. of Relig.*, § 4.

² *Met.*, § 233.

³ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 461, 617 seq.; *Outl. of Æs.*, § 9.

⁴ *Logik*, §§ 303-312; *Mikr.*, 1: pp. 393-398.

lectual life has always to do with an external reality which is eternally impenetrable to it."¹ It is faith in the essential moral veracity of the world, as well as in its essential rationality, that stings him to revolt against that view which represents thought as missing its mark, as aiming at things *per se*, but perforce contenting itself with 'mere phenomena.' On the contrary, reality does not elude thought; reality is not a hidden world of noumena, it is the world we know in experience.² Epistemologically, then, the world of reality is a unity. That the unity of the ultimate principle is at bottom an ethical demand even more than a speculative, can appear fully, however, only when inquiry has been made into the nature of the Unit Being, and this inquiry must be left for a subsequent chapter.

The second of Lotze's early prejudices, the conviction that the intellectual life is more than thought, springs obviously from an ethical root. He means here cognitive thought, and he recognized in the mental life other data than those of cognition, and other ends than those of theoretical knowledge. Thought is the instrument for the apprehension of truth; feeling, or 'reason appreciative of worth,' for the apprehension of value. The good belongs to the realm of value, which, Lotze held, is related to the realm of truth as end to means. But whatever the relation which may finally be established between the two realms, we are not warranted at the start in giving truth the precedence of value, or in making cognition superior to the practical reason.

¹ *KZ. Schr.*, 3: p. 453.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, 1: pp. 396-397.

CHAPTER II.

LOTZE'S IDEA OF THE GOOD ; ITS PLACE IN HIS SYSTEM.

PFLIEDERER, who is perhaps the most sympathetic of his critics, characterizes Lotze's philosophy as a lofty ethico-religious Idealism upon the basis of a moderate and cautious realism.¹ The Idea of the Good is in a peculiar sense the dominating idea of Lotze's system. The Good is the ground of all that is, and the end for which everything is as it is. Actuality is not a mere course of the world, it is the 'kingdom of God.'² The meaning of the world is what comes first, Lotze says in the conclusion to the *Metaphysik*. This meaning is not simply something which subjected itself to the order established ; rather from it alone comes the need of that order and the form in which it is realized. Elsewhere Lotze affirms that "all metaphysical truth consists only in the forms which must be assumed by a world that depends upon the principle of the Good."³ It is the purpose of this chapter to develop Lotze's conception of the Good, to show in a general way its significance for his system, and to point out certain ethical ideas derived from this primary conception which determine, in large measure, his characteristic metaphysical doctrines.

Lotze begins always with experience, with the empirical facts that lie close at hand. The unity which philosophy seeks with sure instinct must be for him a unity found by the converging of the threads of the manifold. To the theoretical reason no such unity is apparent. On the contrary, what we find is a diversity of elements apparently irreducible and ultimate : "All our analysis of the cosmic order ends in leading back our thought to a consciousness of necessarily valid *truths*, our perception to the

¹Pfleiderer : *Lotze's philosophische Weltanschauung*, pp. 62-63.

²*Ph. of Relig.*, § 80.

³*Outl. of Met.*, § 93.

intuition of immediately given *facts* of reality, our conscience to the recognition of an absolute standard of all determinations of *worth*."¹ Lotze speaks of these as 'elemental forms of our knowledge'² and as 'realms' or 'powers.'³

This cleavage of our universe into the realms of truth or universal law, reality, and worth, presents a problem insolvable by the theoretical reason. We are not able to embrace all three in one comprehensive notion, or from any one to obtain the others by logical deduction. The three involve one another, imply one another, but the connection is obscure. The necessary truths, or universal laws, tell us merely what must follow from given conditions. They are hypothetical in their nature, they never state what is, but only what must be if something else is. They do not give us reality, but they imply reality. On the other hand, reality as given to us in intuitions is never presented as necessary; it simply *is*. Other and quite different forms of reality are conceivable. Again, our ideas of worth do not point to a definite world of forms as their proper consequence; they attach themselves to but a part of the content of reality, and are imperfectly realized therein.⁴ This incoherence baffles thought, which aims at unity, and is moreover the source of perplexing doubts.

The key to Lotze's entire system is found in his conviction that these three realms are ultimately one.⁵ There is but one real power and this appears to us "under a three-fold image of an end to be realized—namely, first some definite and desired Good, then, on account of the definiteness of this, a formed and developing reality, and, finally, in this activity an unvarying reign of law."⁶ This view Lotze terms a confession of his philosophic faith. Near the end of the *Mikrokosmos* he speaks of it as the consummation towards which he has been all the while working, though without feeling entitled to make explicit use in the fore-

¹ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 461; cf. 3: pp. 610, 616.

² *Mikr.*, 3: p. 461.

³ *Outl. of Æs.*, § 8.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 461-462.

⁵ Cf. Pfeiderer: *Lotze's philosophische Weltanschauung*, p. 63; Thieme: *Der Primat der praktischen Vernunft bei Lotze*, pp. 21-26; Vorbrodt: *Principien der ethik und Religionsphilosophie Lotze's*, p. 10.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 609-610.

going portion of his work of a philosophic view from which its parts taken separately might seem to be logically developed.¹ The final synthesis of Truth, Reality, and Worth is the goal of Lotze's thought, fore-shadowed from the start; only from this final point of view are his metaphysical tenets thoroughly intelligible in themselves and in their combination as a system. The one real principle is the Highest Good;² this is the genuine reality "in the sense that all else is in relation to it, subordinate, deduced, mere semblance or means to an end."³ The whole sum of Nature is but the condition of the realization of the Good.⁴ Those principles gained by abstraction from the mode of behavior of 'things' and termed by us general laws,⁵ are but the formulæ of a universal mechanism by which the Good as Supreme Principle realizes itself.⁶ This is the meaning of Lotze's statement that the beginning of Metaphysic lies in Ethics, that the ground of what *should* be is to be sought in that which *is*.⁷ In this sense Lotze's system is a teleological Idealism; everything exists only by reason of the fact that it has its necessary place in the purpose which embraces all reality.⁸ The conviction of the supremacy of the Good Lotze declares to be the source of his respect for scientific investigation into the mechanical order of nature, as well as of his "obstinate refusal to see in all mechanism anything more than that form of procedure which is given by the highest reality to the living development of its content."⁹

Granting that the connection between the three realms is obscure, let us inquire a little further into this connection and the grounds for believing that it exists.

¹ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 459-460.

² *Outl. of Met.*, § 93; *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 620-623.

³ *Outl. of Met.*, § 92.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 1: p. 447.

⁵ *Outl. of Met.*, § 33.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 616-618.

⁷ *Met.*, *Schluss*.

⁸ Cf. Erdmann: *Hist. of Philos.*, p. 309; Santayana: *Lotze's Moral Idealism*, *Mind*, 1890.

⁹ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 622. Thieme points out that Lotze was indebted to Weisse for these three ideas. *Der Primat der praktischen Vernunft bei Lotze*, p. 26. In the primacy given to the ethical element we see the influence of Fichte as well.

As regards the world of reality, human reason and insight are helpless before the task of showing why the world should take just the forms we find in it in order to the realization of the end. Our knowledge of nature and of history is far too limited to admit of our tracing the development of the supreme principle. A boundless insight into nature, Lotze believes, would at least make it appear that reality is indissolubly connected with the realm of Worth and Good.¹ The plan of the universe in its details is necessarily hid from finite beings. The existence of evil and of sin in nature and in history presents an insurmountable difficulty to finite reason.² In fact, we are forced to admit a "chasm between the realm of ideas or final purposes, and the realm of real means."³

Lotze is strongly averse to the attempt to *deduce* the universe from a single principle. All such attempts are fore-doomed to failure, he believes. This has been the chief source of error, according to his thinking, in the great constructive systems of philosophy. To quote from the *Outlines of Metaphysics*: "Although we apprehend the Highest Good as the one real principle on which the validity of the metaphysical axioms in the world depend, we cannot regard it as a principle of cognition that can be profitably converted into a major premise from which to deduce the sum of metaphysical truth. . . . The very name, the Highest Good, designates the content, the *essentia* of the highest principle, but not the form of existence which we must attribute to it as a conditioning cause of the world of phenomena."⁴ The real world in all its varied forms can never be shown to be the inevitable consequence and expression of the principle of the Good. Lotze gives some suggestions as to the course that must be taken by arguments aiming at a thorough solution of this problem;⁵ yet all such arguments must inevitably be inadequate. Such proof alone, Lotze admits, could fully justify his belief that the sphere of mechanism is unbounded, but its significance everywhere subordinate.⁶

¹ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 609.

² *Mikr.* 3: p. 610.

³ *Outl. of Es.* § 14.

⁴ *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 93-94.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 618-619.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 618.

Universally valid truths, also, though they cannot be deduced therefrom, are intelligible only with reference to the Idea of the Good.¹ That there is a realm of truth at all seems to Lotze conceivable only in a world the ultimate principle of which is ethical, and which has as its goal the realization of the Good.² Knowledge is not in itself an ultimate end; in the last resort it has worth only as offering a clue to the true meaning of existence.³ All ultimate principles, whether those of the theoretical reason, or of ethics and æsthetics, are intelligible only as expressions of an order realized in the world by the Good as the supreme principle. Order, indicating purpose, is the testimony of the world without us and the world within us to a dominating ethical principle. In the *Logik* Lotze shows that the speculative ideal itself points beyond logic to the content of a supreme principle which is the ultimate ground of the universal laws themselves, of the direction in which the world as a whole develops, and of the individual forms which reality assumes at each moment.⁴ In the conclusion to the *Metaphysik* we find the following statement: "All those laws which can be designated by the common name of mathematical mechanics, whatever that name includes of eternal and self-evident truths, and of laws which as a matter of fact are everywhere valid—all these exist not on their own authority, nor as a baseless destiny to which reality is compelled to bow. They are (to use such language as men can) only the first consequences which in the pursuit of its end, the living and active meaning of the world has laid at the foundation of all particular realities as a command embracing them all."

But while emphasizing the subordination of Reality and Truth to the Good, we must not forget that the three realms form *one* universe. The distinction of the three is a distinction for thought only. There is but one world-process, from which thought abstracts three elements—the field in which, the means by which, the end for which the whole is. There can be no separation of

¹ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 619–620.

² Cf. Thieme: *Der Primat der praktischen Vernunft bei Lotze*, pp. 13–14; Vorbrodt: *Principien der Ethik*, p. 36.

³ *Mikr.*, Introd., pp. vi–viii.

⁴ *Logik*, § 151.

Truth from Reality; the former is and is realized in the latter. No truth, no law "can exist within the world *before, outside, between, or above*, the 'things' concerning which it is assumed to hold good."¹ 'Law' is nothing else than the thing's mode of behavior. The 'thing' *is* its unvarying nature as expressed in its mode of behavior; it is no kernel or core of reality apart from this; its sole reality is its mode of action. The law, then, *is* the thing.² A general law is an abstraction corresponding to the abstract conception of thing.³ The superficial view by which Reality and the realms of Universal Law stand over against one another, must then be modified and corrected. There is no inert and plastic Reality which is subjected to the universal dominion of Law; nor, on the other hand, is there any system of eternally valid Truths which exist prior to Reality and condition its form and action. Reality is activity in accordance with immanent law.

But neither can Reality and Truth be separated, save in thought, from the Good. The Good is not something apart from the world, hovering over it, as it were, and directing its progress towards a goal. The universe is One Being in whom Reality, Truth, and the Good, are indissolubly united. The Absolute Being may be conceived under differing aspects as the sole Reality, the Supreme Principle, or an Infinite Process, realizing an end. This Being, which must also be conceived as the highest and only true Personality,⁴ 'faith calls God.' Because in ethical attributes is found the most adequate expression of His nature, the idea of the Good is the fundamental conception.⁵ What is for metaphysics the World-Ground, is for the personal apprehension of man 'the Highest Good personal'⁶ or 'Living Love.'⁷ For the Infinite there was "no Reality *within* which He had to realize His creation, nor laws which prior to Himself, *of them-*

¹ *Outl. of Met.*, § 96.

² *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 25, 26, 32, 34; *Mikr.*, 3: p. 481.

³ *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 32-33.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 563-568; *Ph. of Relig.*, §§ 33, 41.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 615-623; *Ph. of Relig.*, § 81.

⁶ *Outl. of Met.*, § 92.

⁷ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 615.

selves determined what was possible and what was impossible.”¹ All that exists *is* but the Infinite Being ; on no other assumption is the ‘relatedness’ of things intelligible. Nor can we think of the Infinite as conditioned by a system of pre-mundane laws. That which we know as the sum of universal truths is but ‘the mode of action of Omnipotence.’²

The solution of this problem by thus resolving what seemed three irreducible elements of our world into one, a trinity within a unity, is a solution not afforded by the theoretical reason. It is not susceptible of proof. “In our theoretic cognition,” says Lotze, “we shall never get further than a faith founded on certain *motifs* that, nevertheless, in the totality of the world this perfect concord [that is, of the Good, Reality, and Truth] does take place.”³ The justification of this faith will appear more clearly when the concept of Value has been considered somewhat in detail, and to this we will now turn our attention.

The concept of Value, or Worth (*Werth*), holds an important place in Lotze’s philosophical system. It is, therefore, especially unfortunate that we have nowhere a full and systematic statement of his views on ethics, æsthetics, and religion, wherein the discussion of Value would find place. This is due chiefly to the fact that the third part of his *System*, that which was to contain the practical philosophy, was never completed. One must also deplore in Lotze’s treatment of this subject a certain confusion in the use of terms and a lack of careful analysis, in marked contrast with his close and cautious reasoning on metaphysical and logical subjects.

The concept of Value, as used by Lotze, includes both the Good and the Beautiful. In one connection, he adds to these the ‘happy,’ or ‘blessedness,’ as uniting with the Good and the Beautiful to form “one complex of all that has value.”⁴ Elsewhere he enumerates the good, the beautiful, and the holy, or

¹ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 598.

² *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 589 ; Cf. 3 : pp. 606–607 ; *Ph. of Relig.*, §§ 48, 49, 54.

³ *Outl. of Æs.*, § 14 ; Cf. *Mikr.*, 4 : pp. 466, 612.

⁴ *Outl. of Met.*, § 92.

righteousness, as comprising our Ideas of what has worth.¹ In spite of some confusion here, it is clear enough that Lotze means to distinguish the judgment of worth from the merely cognitive judgment of fact or of truth. The content of the latter judgment is immutable but indifferent. The content of the former we pronounce 'beautiful' or 'good'; it is not indifferent to us, it has worth. In the *Philosophy of Religion*, Lotze examines the conception of a world-aim. Such an aim can be only that which has supreme value, and his conclusion is that only to happiness, or 'blessedness,' can supreme value be attributed.² Nothing other than 'blessedness' can be the world-aim, since "nothing else affirms itself so unconditionally and immediately in respect to its value."³ Only in regard to blessedness is the question absurd why *it* rather than something else should be the final purpose of the world. In just this end the goodness of the world consists. It is only in eternal blessedness that the final end of all world-faring is realized; this is the aim for the realization of which every thing is as it is, and every law of the world commands what it commands.⁴ But just as there is no pleasure in general, every pleasure having a definite content, so the world-aim of blessedness is not realizable in a general sense, but only in the concrete. We must turn our attention to the standard of value as apprehended by the individual.

The idea of worth can have meaning only with reference to a subject capable of sensibility;⁵ hence the importance of the feelings as affording the basis of all judgments of value. All values, says Lotze, are apprehended primarily by means of feelings of pleasure and pain: "There is nothing at all in the world which would have any value until it has produced some pleasure in some being or other capable of enjoyment."⁷ It is feeling that makes us aware of the world of values under the world of forms,⁸

¹ Cf. *Pract. Philos.*, § 12.

² *Philos. of Relig.*, § 66.

³ *Outl. of Æst.*, § 13.

⁴ Cf. *Æt. Subst.*, 31 p. 539; *Natür.*, 2: pp. 309-310.

⁵ Cf. *Philos.*, 2: pp. 55, 60, 70.

⁶ *Æst.*, 1: p. 10.

⁷ *Pract. Philos.*, 1: p. 10.

⁸ *Æst.*

and so gives us the key to the meaning of our universe. The all-pervading mechanism of nature finds its goal in an inner world of pleasure and of finite enjoyment.¹ Vorbrodt believes that it is not too much to say that feeling is for Lotze, as will for Wundt, the primary function out of which all others grow.² It is certainly essential to a comprehension of Lotze's system that his doctrine of the feelings as the instrument of value be clearly understood. No principle of his philosophy has been more severely criticised, and none is perhaps more open to criticism.

Primarily, the standard of value is pleasure-pain. From this purely subjective and individual experience, an objective and universal standard emerges later, as an attempt will be made to show; but the elementary feelings of pleasure and pain form the basis of all those judgments of worth which constitute so important a part of the activity of the human mind. In the *Medizinische Psychologie*, Lotze discusses the mechanism of the feelings in their significance for psychical life.³ The capacity to respond to excitations with feelings of pleasure and pain is the distinctive characteristic of the physical life he attributes to things. If an atom of a so-called material mass be supposed to have a soul life, it is not necessary to grant it *ideas*, but we must attribute to it this primal experiencing of pleasure and pain.⁴ Nothing is *real* that does not feel as well as act; reciprocal action implies necessarily a being that feels, that measures crudely the value of its inner states by joy and desire, pain and aversion. There can be no action without passion.⁵ Pleasure and pain finally reduce to reaction to stimulation in harmony with, or opposed to, vital evolution.⁶

Pleasure-pain is, furthermore, the basis of self-consciousness, and therefore of personality. Not in the relation of thought to the thinker, but in feelings of pleasure and pain is the Ego first

¹ *Mikr.*, 2: p. 320.

² Vorbrodt: *Prinzipien der Ethik u. s. w.*, pp. 11, 15.

³ See *Med. Psy.*, Buch 2, Kap. 2.

⁴ *Med. Psy.*, pp. 133-134, 234; cf. *Mikr.*, 1: p. 269; *Kl. Schr.*, 2: p. 82 f.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 525.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 1: pp. 269-271; 2: p. 315; *Outl. of Psy.*, § 48.

conscious that its individual states belong to it, are its own.¹ For this self-feeling the simpler experiences are adequate no less than the higher and more complex. Without it the "consummate intelligence of an angel could not rise to the knowledge of itself as an Ego"; with it "the crushed worm undoubtedly distinguishes its own suffering from the rest of the world." To each stimulation from the outer world the soul reacts with feeling as well as sensation. A special pleasure or pain corresponds originally to each simple sensation, and this element of feeling measures the value of the stimulation for the individual.² To the sensation the mind responds with a judgment of being; to the feeling, with a judgment of value. Judgments of being express facts; judgments of value, the worth of these facts.³

Feelings of pleasure and pain, therefore, point beyond mere sentiency, their value is not merely subjective and individual. It is the distinctive characteristic of human sentience that we not only never apprehend sense-impressions as indifferent contents, but also that in the accompanying feelings we never become aware merely of a value for us, but of an intrinsic value as well.⁴ This judgment (*Beurtheilung*) of value is never wholly absent even in case of the lower senses, where it is suppressed by the intensity of self-reference, but becomes increasingly prominent in the higher senses, until in sound and color almost every trace of egoistic interest may be effaced.⁵ There is a "tendency to see in the nature of external things a virtue peculiar to themselves, an immediate worth or the reverse, recognized by our pain or pleasure but not dependent on their presence."⁶ Thus feeling, even in its simplest and most primitive manifestations, shows an inclination to transcend the individual. In its recognition of an intrinsic worth in things, it postulates a realm of objective values. At the moment that it announces itself to consciousness as the

¹ *Mikr.*, 1 : p. 280; 2 : pp. 313-314; *Outl. of Psy.*, §§ 52-53; *Philos. of Relig.*, § 37.

² *Mikr.*, 1 : p. 272; 2, p. 182.

³ Cf. Thieme : *Der Primat der praktischen Vernunft bei Lotze*, pp. 5-9.

⁴ *Werth an sich*, *Mikr.*, 2 : p. 185. Cf. also *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 217-218, 321.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 187-188.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 2 : p. 193.

well-being or ill-being of the organism, it also points away from the subjective and particular experience to a universal and sovereign order.¹ But feeling further serves as the basis of the highest activity of intelligence—that of 'reason appreciative of worth.'² As inspiring and guiding the Ideals of reason, feeling realizes its highest function. In its judgments of worth, reason likewise fulfils its highest destiny. Here, as in the simplest sense experience, the feeling of pleasure or pain yields the data on which the judgment is based. This true function of feeling becomes clear as we consider its relation to the æsthetic, moral, and theoretical Ideals. An Ideal, as the term itself implies, is a product of thought. However based upon and rooted in the immediate and particular, an Ideal is universal, conceptual. As such, it implies necessarily the activity of thought. Feeling may enter into account as a determining factor of much importance, but an Ideal can not be a feeling-product merely.

In his treatment of æsthetics, Lotze insists that we apprehend the beautiful only in the form of an Idea, or an Ideal.³ Primarily, indeed, beauty consists in the subjective feeling of æsthetic pleasure ; but we are speedily under the necessity of attributing an objective reality to the beautiful. It claims a universal validity which is not satisfied in the individual pleasure.⁴ We have seen that the general Idea of Beauty implies reference to purpose, to a world-plan in which the end to be realized, the reality in which, and the laws by which, it is realized, are believed to be perfectly synthesized.⁵ Any object is beautiful in the degree that it presents this congruity of means, law, and end, and thus conforms to and suggests the general Idea of Beauty. It is enough to note here that the æsthetic judgment is based upon the immediate feeling of pleasure in the contemplation of the beautiful object, but involves a reference to an Ideal of universal and absolute worth. The value of the beautiful object consists not in the merely

¹ Cf. *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 341-342.

² *Einer werthempfindenden Vernunft. Mikr.*, 1 : p. 274. Cf. *Mikr.*, 1 : p. 276, *werthbestimmenden Vernunft.*

³ *Outl. of Æs.*, § 7.

⁴ Cf. *Outl. of Æs.*, §§ 1-2, 4-6, 16.

⁵ *Outl. of Æs.*, §§ 10, 23.

sentient pleasure it gives us, but rather in the apprehension of a teleological meaning of the world which the pleasure serves to indicate. Here we find implied the activity of a worth-determining reason.¹ The immediacy of the judgment of beauty as based upon feeling, and the idea of purpose involved in the judgment, are doubtless to be traced to the influence of Kant's third *Critique*.

The moral Ideals of the practical reason are likewise the outgrowth of an appreciative feeling.² Ethical ideals vary with degree of culture and are in large measure the result of culture. Morality never depends on culture alone, however; it has its roots in the constitution of the mind, and rests on a basis of feeling.³ The feeling of pleasure, Lotze asserts with the utmost emphasis, is the positive basis of the judgment of moral value. An indissoluble connection exists between the notion of pleasure and the notion of worth.⁴ The fear of Hedonism has often led to the statement that the good is pleasing because it is good, not good because it is pleasing. This caution Lotze repudiates as unnecessary, and boldly asserts that to be good and to be pleasing designate exactly one and the same thing.⁵ The way in which he further defines his meaning serves, however, somewhat to modify this statement. The pleasurable feeling, he says, is the sole means by which the specific and inherent value of things is realized, just as light "must illumine things in order that their different colors, which they do not have in darkness, may originate." That is, the feeling of pleasure is the medium and index of a value that is not purely subjective. Pleasure is the only absolutely self-assertory end, since every other may be called in question, while this alone is a self-evident good.⁶ If obedience or disobedience to ethical law were to occasion no trace of pleasure or pain to any sensitive being, it would be utterly incomprehensible why just the obedience and not the disobedience should have obligatory force.

¹ *Mikr.*, I : pp. 273-274.

² *Mikr.*, I : p. 276.

³ *Mikr.*, I : p. 277.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 2 : p. 316 f.; *Pract. Philos.*, § 7.

⁵ *Pract. Philos.*, § 8.

⁶ *Pract. Philos.*, § 4.

⁷ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 67; *Pract. Philos.*, § 9.

"It is impossible to understand what is to constitute the 'value' of any action if its results are not able to produce some 'good' . . . and this latter always exists only in the pleasure of some sensitive spirit."¹ Many statements might be quoted from Lotze's various works which assert as strongly as any of the foregoing the primary dependence of ethical value upon the feeling of pleasure.² Moreover, ethics has to do with conduct, action; and pleasure and pain are the springs of practical activity.³

This is by no means the whole account of the matter, however. We straightway find new factors entering in, which modify the hedonistic estimate, and lead to a new standard of value. There is no such thing as abstract pleasure, pleasure in general, which can be reduced to the merely qualitative determination of greater or less. On the contrary, every pleasure is specific, it is pleasure in *something*, and therefore differs qualitatively from every other pleasure.⁴ Thus every feeling of pleasure leads away from the self and its agreeable consciousness to an objective excellence. This is the first remove from egoism, and proves that pleasure posited as an end in itself involves a logical absurdity.⁵

While egoism is theoretically the only motive power of our activity, as a matter of fact its inadequacy is soon obvious.⁶ It contains an internal contradiction which is, as it were, the germ of a higher principle. Not only is its earliest reference to some object external to the self, but the object of desire is also early transformed from the sensible to the ideal.⁷ Moreover, the egoistic impulse is constantly checked and thwarted by the external conditions of life.⁸ But further, the very egoism which prompts to a comparison of one's self with others, by this very act forces the recognition of some well-established standard and ground of comparison. The superiority in which egoism finds satisfaction would lose its value if it were wholly unique. It is a superiority shared with

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 67.

² See *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 308-310; 313-333.

³ *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 313-316.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 2: p. 321; *Pract. Philos.*, § 8; *Outl. of Psy.*, § 49.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 2: p. 320.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 2: p. 327.

⁷ *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 324-325.

⁸ *Mikr.*, 2: p. 327.

others, albeit rare, and as such it must be intelligible in itself by reference to universal notions.¹ "The hidden shackle which egoism carries about with it in its inevitable dependence upon the justification of a universal is very soon transformed into an external bond."² Continual reference to the judgment of others tends to supplant the individual by the universal, and to bind each individual to his fellows. The 'unconquerable impulse towards imitation' assists this non-egoistic tendency. Hence a capacity for self-subordination, for self-conquest through higher ideals of conduct and character, and the basis of genuine moral evolution.³

Conscience enters into account to modify still further the egoistic character of feeling. Lotze does not define precisely what he means by conscience. It is evidently conceived by him as a rational principle which presupposes, however, an original 'sense of obligation' as an essential characteristic of the human mind.⁴ To a certain kind of excitation the mind reacts according to its nature with what we term moral feelings and judgments. The definite content of our ethical ideals can only be developed through experience.⁵ The notions of Good and good things are reached through conscience on the basis of feeling. Conscience approves and enjoins certain dispositions and actions, and these we term good. Such a thing as a moral judgment of conduct is possible only on the assumption that such conduct leads to pleasure and pain.⁶ When conscience prescribes practical laws the conduciveness of which to our happiness we do not directly see, we yet assume that it is there.⁷ An unconditioned *ought* is unthinkable.⁸ Conscience further reveals to us the different values of pleasures ; that is, it assigns to the various pleasures their rank as higher or lower in the scale of worth.⁹ The effort to attain pleasure conscience pronounces to be in itself natural and without

¹ Cf. *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 328-330.

² *Mikr.*, 2 : p. 331.

³ Cf. *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 332-340.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 312, 342.

⁵ Cf. *Mikr.*, 2 : p. 311 ; *Philos. of Relig.*, § 76.

⁶ *Pract. Philos.*, § 15.

⁷ *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 319-320.

⁸ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 79.

⁹ *Pract. Philos.*, § 9 ; *Mikr.*, 2 : 322.

blame, but not in the least degree meritorious. Only such conduct as is not determined by the end of personal pleasure receives this latter ascription of value.¹ Only the satisfaction of conscience itself is exempt from all fluctuations of value.² "We should not even call good the frame of mind of him who, by a choice involving no sacrifice, should simply prefer the worth which is greater, both objectively and to him, to the worth which is lesser; on the contrary, that which for the feeling mind is the nearest and most urgent worth, must be sacrificed to some other worth, which to it, as feeling, is not greater—the welfare of self must be sacrificed to the content of a supreme command."³ Had egoism any claim to supremacy left it, we should find the last trace of such a claim repudiated by the fact that conscience further enjoins benevolence as the supreme principle of conduct.⁴

Thus, as in the case of æsthetic Ideals, so also at the basis of the moral Ideals we find pleasure and pain affording the data of the practical reason's determinations of worth. As before, we find also a rational principle present at the very beginning, manifest in the simplest assignment of value to an immediate object. This rational principle increases in potency until in the ideas of a moral world-order, of universally valid moral law, of the dignity and destiny of man as a moral being, that which is of merely immediate and subjective value for feeling is quite transcended. Feeling itself, however, is not transcended. It is present from first to last; without it there is no apprehension of value whatever.

In this connection, and before proceeding to consider the influence of feeling in the formation of the Ideals of the theoretical reason, it may be well to ask in how far Lotze has succeeded in maintaining a middle ground between Hedonism and Rationalism. It is quite consistent with his general philosophical position as a mediator between empiricism and idealism that Lotze should see the truth in both these opposed ethical theories, for Hedonism may be regarded as the expression of ethical realism,

¹ *Pract. Philos.*, § 4.

² *Mikr.*, 2: p. 323.

³ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 614.

⁴ *Pract. Philos.*, § 15; *Philos. of Relig.*, § 68.

and Rationalism the expression of ethical idealism.¹ He saw clearly the necessity of admitting both sensibility and reason as factors in moral life. He recognized with equal clearness the errors involved in any attempt to resolve morality into either feeling or reason, to the exclusion of the other. He has not, however, it seems to me, been wholly successful in showing how the two elements must be harmonized in a complete theory.

In his criticism of Hedonism, Lotze has, with great acuteness, put his finger upon the exact spots of weakness in the argument. The notion of pleasure as the end of action is absurd, he says, since it is always an *object* which is aimed at, and not the feeling excited.² This is the distinction that Professor James makes between a pleasant act and an act pursuing pleasure.³ Lotze sees also, with J. S. Mill, that pleasures must be distinguished qualitatively; he further sees what Mill failed to see, that such a qualitative distinction is incompatible with the hedonistic theory. Lotze recognizes also in ethical commands an obligatory value and majesty which is beyond the scope of the hedonistic measure.⁴ He does not fail to emphasize the rational element in moral experience and development. Even self-realization as the end falls under his condemnation as essentially egoistic. The 'self-enjoyment of one's own fair personality,' he contends, is not the true end of life.⁵

On the other hand, Lotze has criticised no less keenly the extreme rationalistic ethics. The purely formal character of the Kantian ethics is revolting to him.⁶ "An unconditioned 'ought' is unthinkable; and only a conditioned 'ought' is possible which attaches advantages and disadvantages to the observance or non-observance of what is prescribed."⁷ Again, he says: "No ethics can avoid having reference to a purpose that is final and in itself of absolute value. No matter to what extent many rigorous

¹ See J. Seth: *Principles of Ethics*, p. 152.

² *Mikr.*, 2: p. 321.

³ James: *Principles of Psychology*, II, pp. 555-558.

⁴ Cf. *Philos. of Relig.*, §§ 77-78.

⁵ *Pract. Philos.*, § 29.

⁶ *Pract. Philos.*, § 5.

⁷ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 79.

systems formulate their highest ethical laws apparently without any such regard, still, in addition to the assurances that they are the highest laws, the conclusion must always be supplied: what then would be the result if these laws were not obeyed?"¹

Lotze's way of treating the ethical problem suggests his solution of the epistemological problem. Just as knowledge is the result of the mind's reaction upon data given in sense, so morality depends ultimately upon data given in feeling. Both sensation and feeling are subjective, but in the case of both it is true that the subjective experience is taken by reason as the index of something objective. In both cases we must suppose an original activity of mind and a further work of elaboration in thought. Thus far Lotze's ethical theory is intelligible, and commends itself by its recognition of both feeling and reason as indispensable factors. In finding the ultimate criterion of value in the pleasure produced in sensitive beings, however, Lotze finally reverts to the position of Hedonism. After building up an ethics out of sensibility and reason, in the end he finds the supreme good in sensibility. Reason, judging of worth by the aid and inspiration of feeling, finds its goal not in an objective, but in a subjective good.²

Now this position, it seems to me, logically implies the denial of that which Lotze seeks most strenuously to prove—the validity of our moral ideals. In order to this, ethical value must be conceived as objective as well as subjective. To quote words which put this with clearness and force: "The objectivity of good is no less essential than the objectivity of truth. To make truth subjective, to resolve the object of knowledge into the experience or consciousness of the knowing subject, were to destroy truth and knowledge. . . . Intellectual subjectivity means intellectual scepticism, or the decentralization of knowledge. And to make the good subjective, to resolve the ethical object into the experience or consciousness of its subject, is, no less inevitably, to destroy the good. . . . If we are to avoid moral scepticism we must avoid ethical subjectivity, or the decentralization of the good."³ We have seen that Lotze assigns an objective worth

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 67. Cf. *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 317-320.

² Cf. *Philos. of Relig.*, § 67; *Pract. Philos.*, § 8.

³ J. Seth: *Principles of Ethics*, p. 120.

to things, a worth of which the subjective experience is the index. We have then a world of objective values. But in what does the value of things consist? Lotze's answer is that things possess value, after all, only in that and in so far as they produce pleasure in sensitive beings. But this is to turn back upon his own track, to deny objective value, and to lapse into Hedonism.¹ And yet it is unfair to attach to a man's theory a name which is not only distinctly repudiated by him, but which is in fact contradicted by important elements in his doctrine. A hedonist Lotze is not, in spite of his reversion to the hedonistic standard. This final reference of objective values to the pleasure of sensitive beings is quite extraneous and contradictory to his ethical doctrine. The truth seems to be that while Lotze saw clearly the inadequacy both of reason and of sensibility as the sole standard of value, and readily granted that both must be taken into account, yet he failed to apprehend the manner of their synthesis in moral life. Not only so, but he failed to apprehend clearly the lack of such a synthesis and the need of one. The result of this double failure is the vacillation that we have noted regarding the standard of worth. As it stands, his theory is unsatisfactory in that it contains contradictory elements. To be just to Lotze, however, we must again remember that his theory of ethics was never put forth in systematic completeness. An attempt to do this would very likely have revealed to him the inconsistencies of his position.

Let us turn from this excursion into Lotze's ethics to resume the course of our discussion. The feelings have an important function in the formation of the Ideals of the theoretical reason as well as in æsthetic and moral Ideals. This function will appear most clearly perhaps if we consider feeling as influencing theory, and as affording a criterion of truth.

'Reason appreciative of worth' yields the Ideals of the speculative activity. Lotze here distinguishes reason (*Vernunft*)

¹ The mere fact that Lotze makes benevolence the fundamental ethical principle, does not, of course, save his theory from Hedonism. This easy transition to an altruism that interprets the good as another's pleasure, even to the denial or exclusion of one's own, is as obvious a makeshift to avoid the full consequences of Hedonism as when Mill maintains that in order to obtain happiness it must not be explicitly sought.

from understanding (*Verstand*) by just this difference, that the understanding is purely cognitive, disinterested, but reason is a higher and more characteristically human activity; it is cognizant of worth, and "rejects even the thinkable so long as it is only thinkable, and does not besides by the inherent excellence of its content win recognition of its worth in the world."¹ "If we examine our theory of the universe as the matured product of culture, we find it to a large extent determined by the requirements of our reason. For example, the effort to unify by bringing together particulars under a general law, and general laws under principles of yet wider application, is a dictate of the worth-determining reason. This is an ideal which inspires scientific research, and it is the crowning conception of philosophy."² "In its feeling for the value of things and their relations," says Lotze, "our reason possesses as genuine a revelation as in the principles of logical investigation it has an indispensable instrument of experience."³

But feeling further must be taken into account as an aid in establishing the criterion of truth. All ultimate principles, theoretical and practical alike, rest upon the strength of their own self-evidence. They neither need nor are capable of proof. The criterion of their validity consists wholly in the immediate clearness and certainty with which they thrust themselves upon us as necessarily true.⁴ The whole structure of thought and of practical life is built upon these foundation-stones. We can no more doubt them than we can doubt our own existence. The real ground of our confidence lies beyond cognition, in reason appreciative of value through feeling. For it is quite possible to ask with Descartes whether we are not so constituted that what is false must yet appear to us to be necessarily true. In the face of this scepticism "we are left with nothing but the confidence of reason in itself, . . . the certainty . . . that there is a meaning in the world, and that the nature of that reality which includes us in itself has given our spirits only such necessities of thought

¹ *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 273-274; Cf. *Outl. of Psy.*, §§ 100-101.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, 2: p. 274.

³ *Mikr.*, 2: p. 275.

⁴ Cf. *Logik*, §§ 200, 301; *Outl. of Logic*, § 70; *Kl. Schr.*, 3, pp. 529, 540-541.

as harmonize with it.”¹ In the immediate assurance which we feel of the *worth* of the world and of the world-order lies the security for the truth of our knowledge.² Our confidence in ultimate principles, then—a “confidence which logic can never justify, but which lies at the foundation of all logic”³—is nothing else than a moral and æsthetic faith grounded in the conviction of their worth. We are warranted “in passing from the incontestable *value* of an object of thought to a belief in its reality,” Lotze says. Though they have the appearance of committing a fallacy, such beliefs in fact “rest upon an extremely broad, though unanalyzed foundation of perception; . . . starting from the reality of *a* as given in experience, they connect with it the reality of *b*, which is not so given, but which appears to follow from *a* as a necessity of thought.”⁴ It is really faith in the moral integrity of the universe which demands that what the thinking spirit is constrained to believe to be true, shall be true. The æsthetic condemnation of a world hopelessly disordered and unmeaning is closely allied to the ethical demand, but is of secondary importance. As we have seen, at the root of all judgments of value lies feeling; and thus feeling lends its aid to reason in affording the criterion of truth.

Here it may be well briefly to notice the criticism of Lotze's doctrine of the feelings by Professor Jones. The gist of this is, that Lotze has assigned to feeling, one by one, the functions of thought. Feeling with its consciousness of worth yields the judgment of value; feeling must inspire knowledge, give the impulse to know; feeling supplies the cognitive ideal, affords the criterion of truth, guarantees the principles of thought, and “fills its otherwise empty forms with the value which alone renders them adequate to reality.”⁵ Thought thus shorn of its pretensions becomes a mere formal, arranging activity, and can never yield knowledge.⁶ Jones asks very pertinently whether feeling

¹ *Outl. of Met.*, § 94.

² Cf. *Logik*, § 303.

³ *Ibid.*, § 349.

⁴ *Ibid.*, § 348.

⁵ Jones, *Doctrine of Thought*, pp. 57-60, 70-72.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 119, 283.

can yield the judgment of value apart from and without the coöperating activity of thought. Can the *feeling* of pleasure or pain be identified with the *judgment* of value?¹ Surely not; but I do not so understand Lotze. The foregoing discussion has failed of its purpose if it has not shown the writer's belief that Lotze's doctrine necessarily implies the activity of thought operative upon the data of feeling from the first. The judgment of value is based upon feeling; it is not pronounced by feeling. Feeling waits upon sensation, though it is not reducible to sensation. Sensation yields data for the judgment of reality, feeling for the judgment of value. Feeling, unaided, can no more give us value, than can sensation, unaided, give us knowledge.² An attempt has been made to show how feeling enters into the Ideals of the practical and the theoretical reason; but in no case does it assume the functions of thought in so doing. Feeling, alone, cannot be said to afford the criterion of truth on Lotze's view, it seems to me. Ultimate principles rest upon their own self-evidence; they are necessities for our thought. The final ground of our conviction of their validity is in our conviction that the world has worth and meaning. But this conviction is itself a judgment—the summing up, as it were, of all our judgments of worth. It could never be reached by thought independently of feeling, and surely never by feeling independently of thought.

The source of the error in this interpretation of Lotze is to be traced, I believe, to a misconception of the meaning of the term 'feeling' as used by him. 'Feeling' is sometimes used by Lotze to signify mere sentiency, mere unmediated experience. It not infrequently, however, connotes a far richer content, one that is mediated and verified by our entire cognitive experience. To urge the former of these uses and ignore the latter, is hopelessly to confuse and distort Lotze's doctrine. Professor Jones seems to me quite justified, however, in his complaint that Lotze "has not sufficiently analyzed feeling, to lay bare the presence of thought in its data, and to show unmistakably the emptiness and unintelligibility of these data apart from thought."³

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 297–298.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, 1: p. 272; p. 182; 2: p. 322. *Outl. of Psy.*, §§ 49–50.

³ See Jones, *Doctrine of Thought*, p. 302.

In his concept of Value and his doctrine of the feelings as the means of its apprehension, we find the clue to Lotze's hostility to Hegel. His recoil from Absolute Idealism no less than from Materialism determined his philosophical attitude. Even his earlier works contain criticisms of Hegel,¹ and the later works abound in them. At every point he finds cause of revolt against the Hegelian doctrine as he conceived it. We may hesitate to agree with Caspari when he says, "*Man darf mit vollen Rechte sagen: Lotze hatte Hegel überwunden.*"² Against his own interpretation of Hegel, however, Lotze's arguments seem quite conclusive. He objects to Hegel's doctrine for two reasons, which perhaps in the end reduce to one: First, any attempt at an *à priori* deduction of the world from one supreme principle, he deems futile and certain to lead to false conclusions. The empiricist in him, the cautious instinct of the man of science, revolts against such a proceeding as ignoring concrete facts. The second objection is very closely allied to this, namely, that Hegel's identification of logic with metaphysics, of thought with reality, ignores the concrete content of reality. A merely logical development postulated as the end and meaning of the world, Lotze contends, is a sacrifice of the wealth of content to the etiquette of form.³ In particular, there is involved the sacrifice of the individual life, the wealth and worth of personality. This is the argument to which Lotze recurs again and again in the chapter on "The Meaning of History."⁴ According to the view which he attributes to Hegel, individuals count for nothing in history; their efforts have no worth and significance in themselves, and their happiness and peace are not among the ends of historical development.⁵ Against what he deems the Hegelian deification of thought, Lotze insists upon the recognition of the entire content of consciousness. Experience is 'richer than thought,' is a phrase constantly reiterated by him. As we have seen, he believed that consciousness yields other data than those of cognition, and data of incal-

¹ Cf. *Outl. of Met.*, 1841, pp. 34-38; *Med. Psy.*, I, 3, § 14.

² Caspari, *Hermann Lotze*, p. 7.

³ Cf. *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 43-45, 463; *Kl. Schr.*, 3: p. 454; *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 11, 90, 177.

⁴ *Mikr.*, VII, 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3: pp. 33, 36, 38-39, 44.

culable significance for personality. To exalt cognition and ignore feeling is to "acknowledge only one-half, and that the poorer half of the world."¹ It is to "impoverish faith without enriching knowledge."²

It would be outside the scope of this inquiry to discuss the mooted question as to the true interpretation of Hegel, whether the thought which he equates with being is to be conceived as abstract or as concrete. If we agree with Caird, McTaggart, and others, that the thought of the dialectic is not thought as an element in experience, merely coördinate with sense, giving the form to experience while sense affords the matter, but, on the contrary, that it is thought that transcends the distinction between subject and object, and includes the object within itself,³ then thought is concrete, there is no denial of content, and Lotze's criticism of Hegel has missed its mark. On the other hand, any philosophy that finds in cognition the sole principle, and loses sight of the practical in the exaltation of the theoretical, is best met, as Lotze would meet it, by reference to personality, and the complete content of experience.

I have sought to show that the ethical element is so far predominant that Lotze's entire system is based upon the Idea of the Good. Out of this fundamental conception grow certain derivative ideas which serve, in some measure, as regulative ideals in the construction of all his metaphysical doctrines. These ideas are unity, teleology, and personality. The relation of these derivative ideas to the Idea of the Good is too obvious to need more than indication here. All three must receive further explanation and discussion in subsequent chapters. It has been pointed out that Lotze was committed to a unitary conception of the world for ethical reasons before he attempted his theoretical exposition of the World-Ground as necessarily a unitary being. There can be but one principle, as there is but one end. The idea of teleology is also implicit in Lotze's fundamental conception. The Good, as

¹ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 44.

² Cf. *Ibid.*, 3 : pp. 536, 612 ; *Philos. of Relig.*, § 4 ; *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 87-90.

³ Cf. Hegel : *Logik*, I, 18-27, 46-48, 62.

conceived by Lotze, is an active principle which realizes itself in all reality. To justify his belief in a final purpose which prescribes the course of the world, is the chief aim of Lotze's philosophical undertaking. The *raison d'être* of the *Mikro-kosmos* is the harmonizing of the teleological with the mechanical view. The idea of personality likewise follows directly from the Idea of the Good and the concept of Value. Value can exist only for a spiritual being capable of apprehending it. The Good as supreme reality is in the highest degree personal. Human life has dignity only as it partakes of this attribute of God. In the subsequent chapters an attempt will be made to show how these ethical conceptions—personality, teleology, and unity,—underlie and condition Lotze's doctrine of the world, of man, and of God.

CHAPTER III.

CONCEPTION OF THE WORLD: THE WORLD TELEOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL.

ATTENTION will be confined in this chapter to two aspects only of Lotze's cosmology—the world as teleological and as spiritual. The problem of the unity of the world we shall reserve for later consideration in connection with Lotze's idea of God.

Both the fundamental conceptions with which we are here concerned are in themselves ethical, and are inspired by an ethical motive as well. Teleology—the doctrine of final causes—necessarily involves the concept of plan or end, which is essentially ethical in content. As used in ethics, this concept doubtless implies purpose consciously directed towards an end. Whether or not it is granted that teleology in the broad sense likewise contains this implication, it must at least be allowed that the teleological conception implies a goal whither things and events tend by forces inherent in them, or a plan within which things stand related as parts to a whole, and are perfectly intelligible only by reference to the whole. In this sense the concept is still ethical. Progress towards a goal implies a *good* realized by such progress; the recognition of a relation of parts to the whole implies a *meaning* which conditions this relation. Thus we are unable to avoid terms which have at least a distinct ethical reference.

The concept of spiritual existence is not less obviously ethical. To be spiritual is to exist for self, in some vague sense, at least. Self-existence is the *sine qua non* of ethical conduct—that is, of self-determination in distinction from determination by external forces. To be spiritual is the primary condition of personal being, and only personal beings are ethical, since for them only can the good be an end, or conduct be possible.

It is clear that ethical motives, also, impel Lotze to attribute a teleological and spiritual character to the world. His entire philosophical activity has its spring in the effort to vindicate the reality of ideal ends. He steadfastly maintains the right to seek such vindication. The practical reason, originating in feeling and ripened into judgment, constrains to seek an interpretation of reality in accord with its ideals of worth. To be inspired and guided thus is as justifiable—nay, as inevitable—as to be inspired and guided by the theoretical reason. Lotze's fundamental conception of the cosmos makes purpose supreme. The teleological view has a value which can not be gainsaid, and which demands a theoretical solution of the problem presented by reality. Lotze's insistence on the spiritual character of the world grows out of his conception of value as apprehended by feeling, and the ethical demand that everything that is real shall not merely exist, but enjoy its existence.

Science has accustomed us to the thought of law as the fundamental aspect of the world, Lotze says in his introduction to the *Metaphysik*;¹ but, in truth the idea of plan or end was the original norm of investigation. It was not as instances of a universal rule that men first conceived things, but as parts of a whole, as bound together 'by the unchangeable purport of a plan.' This idea of the universe, Lotze adds, is the true one, but, unfortunately, barren of results when made the starting-point of speculation. We have to do with a concrete reality, rich and manifold, and only after an exhaustive study of the world as we find it, could we hope to speak with confidence of a plan that unites all the particulars into one organic whole. Yet, even the short-sighted and perhaps distorted view of nature which each of us gains during a brief life-history, reveals a world in which there is much that is purposive, albeit in conjunction with much that is indifferent.² The system of universal and necessary laws seems to imply purpose.³ The fact that we live in a world of events rather than happenings is inexplicable otherwise. When such argu-

¹ *Met.*, § X.

² *Mikr.*, 2 : p. 31.

³ *Met.*, §§ 92-93 ; cf. §§ 27, 58-59.

ments as these are reinforced by the promptings of the moral and religious nature, we can readily account for the widespread conviction that the world is teleological.

But the teleological view straightway finds itself in conflict with a very different one, namely, the mechanical view of the world. If the former has a powerful ally in the spiritual insight and aspirations of men, the latter points with assurance to the splendid structure of natural science as its vindication, and to experience and reason as its sponsors. In his introduction to the *Mikrokosmos*, Lotze has outlined this struggle of opposing views, and defined as the aim of this notable work the reconciliation of the ideal and the mechanical explanations of the world. He was admirably fitted for the undertaking by his sympathy with the ideals of both science and philosophy. His intimate knowledge of science in several of its branches, and that familiarity with scientific methods which belongs only to the trained worker, made it impossible for him to undervalue or greatly to misinterpret the findings of science. Whether or not he was successful in his venture is a question upon which opinions will necessarily differ. The solution of any problem not a matter of demonstration must always remain doubtful; the same arguments appeal with unequal force to different minds, according to natural bias and all the subtle factors in personality.

Before we can decide as to the merits of the dispute between mechanism and teleology, it is necessary to get a clear notion of what is involved in the mechanical conception. As is usually the case with terms that are neither strictly technical, nor yet wholly relegated to ordinary speech, some confusion prevails.

Lotze calls attention to two inadequate and erroneous conceptions, which still prevail in some measure, and tend to obscure the truth. Mechanism as applied to natural phenomena has been used to describe sometimes a peculiar mode of activity, sometimes a particular class of effects. The notion which underlies this usage is in both cases untenable, Lotze maintains.¹ Mechanism as a distinct mode of action, a mere external action that takes no account of the inner relations of things, can nowhere be

¹ *Met.*, §§ 221-223.

found in nature. Even in the inorganic world, chemism, with its recognition of elements having specific qualities, opposes itself to this view. Every sort of natural process implies qualitative differences in things, and a mode of action determined by their inner nature. There is no action which is merely external.¹ Science may make use of such an abstraction, but let us not deceive ourselves by fancying it a reality. This view of the matter is closely related to Lotze's analysis of cause, and follows directly from his belief that reciprocal action depends upon the inner nature of things.²

But the idea of mechanism as applying to a special class of effects involves the same error.³ For we nowhere find in nature a special class of products due to mechanical activity, whether the term mechanical be interpreted in this external sense or in any other. If by mechanism we mean a merely external action, then there is nothing in nature which is so produced. Gravitation, motion, electrical and chemical action—all the forces we know—produce results dependent upon the nature of that upon which they act. But if by mechanism we mean action in accordance with universal laws, then every class of effects is produced by mechanical agency, and there is no reason for designating any particular class as mechanical in distinction from the rest.⁴

The mechanical conception of nature, of which Lotze is himself a zealous supporter, comprises two necessary features: It first regards nature as a universal system of law,⁵ and secondly, regarding every effect as produced in accordance with law, the mechanical view seeks to determine the effect with accuracy by ascertaining the *elements* and their action.⁶ Some necessary connection in things has always been sought since men began to think about the world in which they find themselves; and the thought that the world is a whole, and is to be accounted for as such, was early developed. By the mechanical conception, however, something different from this is meant. The conception of mechanism is rather that nature necessarily forms a whole, not

¹ *Met.*, § 221.

² *Met.*, §§ 56–57.

³ *Met.*, §§ 222–223.

⁴ Cf. *Mikr.*, XV; 1: p. 488.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 1: pp. 31–32.

⁶ *Mikr.*, 1: p. 34.

only in its import, but in its laws ; that the various forms which nature assumes are distinguished from one another not by different laws, but by different modes of applying the same laws.¹ Nothing is isolated and alien. Everything stands in reciprocal relations with everything else. No form of existence evolves state out of state according to a law peculiar to itself. The law immanent in its nature is a universal law, because all things have to some extent a common nature. In the final analysis, nature's products differ, not in the kind, but in the combination of elements.² But, furthermore, in attempting a mechanical explanation of the world, science is forced to the analysis of the concrete wholes of experience into their parts. It is soon evident that there can be no law of the whole, save as the result of the action and interaction of the parts. And so natural science, pushing its analysis further and further, has been obliged to assume the existence of ultimate elements not perceptible to the senses, innumerable, indestructible, and unchangeable in their properties.³

It is important to notice here two points especially significant for Lotze's view. First, science is not concerned as to the *origin* of the elements ; it assumes them because they are necessary for explanation, but it does not assume that they are unconditioned.⁴ Further, as to the *nature* of the elements, it may be said that, in general, scientific interest centers not in what an element is, but in how it acts. Thus, while science may for its own purposes abstract from the nature of the elements, it can have no object in denying to them a specific nature. On the contrary, chemistry, at least, requires such an assumption. The scientific assumption that force inheres in the elements of the body with an unvarying mode of operation, implies, certainly, that these elements are not mere indifferent points, but rather that they act as they do by virtue of being what they are.⁵ In his discussion of the nature of elements, Lotze shows the influence of Fechner and of Herbart.⁶

¹ *Mikr.*, I : p. 84 ; cf. 2 : pp. 45-46.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, I : pp. 20-21, 32.

³ Cf. *Mikr.*, I : pp. 34-37.

⁴ *Mikr.*, I : pp. 37-38.

⁵ Cf. *Mikr.*, I : pp. 27, 38-40, 56 ; *Met.*, § 193.

⁶ Cf. *Met.*, §§ 188, 191.

The essential factors in the mechanical view, then, are that all occurrences in nature are events issuing in accordance with universal laws, and that all natural products are capable of analysis into ultimate elements whose modes of action are the laws that prevail throughout nature. The mechanical principle as thus conceived reaches over the whole domain of nature, inorganic and organic alike. We have seen that Lotze's scientific labors were directed chiefly towards one aim, to prove the validity of mechanical law as the principle of living bodies, in opposition to the 'vital force' theory.¹ A considerable portion of the *Mikrokosmos* also is devoted to showing the prevalence of mechanism in the human body. As we shall see later, mechanism extends its sway to the psychical life of man, and, in some measure, at least, to his moral life. Lotze insists that the mechanical principle is universal in extent.² Nor should we forget that to admit a universal mechanism meant more in Lotze's day than in our own. By most of Lotze's contemporaries he was understood to have committed himself to materialism—at least before the publication of the *Mikrokosmos*—and to be adding the force of his logic to strengthen that position.

But from Lotze's point of view, to admit mechanism is not to exclude teleology. The mechanical explanation is by no means final. Nowhere is mechanism the essence of the matter, Lotze insists.³ It is the point of view of science, which seeks to explain, not to interpret; it by no means excludes an interpretative view of nature.⁴ The mechanical view assumes its data in the world as given. Its task is the elaboration and explanation of these data. As we have seen, it asks no questions as to the origin of things, it simply accepts them as it finds them; or when, as in its search for elements, it is forced beyond sense, it assumes whatever is necessary for its purposes. In its explanation of things, the mechanical view seeks only the laws in accordance with which things act. It leaves unexplained the origin of things, the nature of things, and the action of things as proceeding from their nature.

¹ See also *Med.*, §§ 226-227.

² Cf. *Med.*, 1 : 37, 26, 28-29, 84, 154-156, 448-450; 3 : 1, 418.

³ *Med.*, 1 : 37, 448, 451; *Med.*, § 229.

⁴ *Med.*, 2 : 1, 6.

Hence mechanism leaves room for the teleological inquiry why things are as they are. To be sure, philosophy as well as science finds itself unable to push its inquiry back to the origin of things. It cannot hope to show why we have just the forms of reality that we have, nor why the laws of their action are precisely as they are. No man sees more clearly than Lotze the futility of such questionings, nor is any man further from accepting a cheap and easy teleology.¹ Yet the attempt to unify our knowledge, to comprehend the parts in relation to the whole, is natural and legitimate. A comprehensive view compels the intelligence to transcend the bare mechanical conception. The fact that the world is a cosmos, that truth, goodness, and beauty are realities for us, that *value* is, as well as fact—this is a view of the world that is great with import. Reason would seem to dictate the belief that a creative and progressive purpose is active in the selection and arrangement of the elements, and is thus the basis of that order which we find in the world.² To this conviction mechanism can not say nay, for it makes no pretence of affording an ultimate explanation of things.

Not only does the mechanical view of nature leave room for the teleological view, but it implies some such ulterior explanation. Order implies purpose, law implies end. Nature as a vast and complicated system of laws implies something wrought out thereby. A comprehensive view of things can but regard mechanism as a system of means to some end. Granting a supreme purpose animating all reality, what better instrument could possibly be devised for its realization than just such a system of mechanical laws as prevails? All finite things could then be conceived as acting in accordance with law immanent in the nature which is theirs by original endowment, and each having its own place and import in the plan which embraces the whole. All mechanism would be but the coherent system and means by which individual ends are realized within the unity of the whole. If such a system be conceived to exist, we can see how the form of it might be abstracted from particular instances, and come to

¹ See *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 17-32.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, 1 : p. 35 ; 2 : pp. 3-4, 24.

be regarded as mere law, mere necessity, quite apart from the ends which are realized by its means.¹

Lotze is not content, however, with showing that mechanism does not exclude teleology, or even that mechanism implies teleology. Any theory that aims at completeness, he confesses, "must comprise some definite representation of the relation in which in nature the *archetypal thought* must stand to the *efficient causes* of its representative *realization*."² It is characteristic of Lotze that his 'aim exceeds his grasp.' Some lack of constructive boldness, some excess of the cautious and critical spirit—or, it may be, a breadth and keenness of vision that revealed the scope of problems and the difficulties in the way—always held him back from presenting more than a hesitating and tentative solution. As to the case in hand, Lotze points out the inadequacy of two attempts at the reconciliation of the mechanical and teleological views, and from his criticism of these, as much as from any direct statements, we are able to infer his own view. The first of these is the anthropomorphic teleology that regards the world as a purposive creation, sustaining the same relation to God that our human products do to our adapting and designing wisdom. Lotze's chief objection to this view is that it postulates an alien material that first exists and then is wrought upon by God.³ The second seeks to avoid this fatal opposition of adaptive purpose and the means of its realization by blending the two as matter and form, the Ideal in the real. Here Lotze evidently has in mind Plato and Aristotle, as well as the Idealists of modern days. Without fully escaping the difficulty of the former view, this has the further defect of reducing the creative purpose to an unconscious reason.⁴

To explain his own position, Lotze has recourse to the standpoint set forth in the preceding chapter. Any complete theory of the universe must recognize a realm of universal laws, of Ideas of value, and of reality, or experience, boundless in the wealth of

¹ Cf. *Mikr.*, 1: pp. 449-450; 2: pp. 46, 465; 3: pp. 616-619, 622-623. *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 70-75.

² *Mikr.*, 2: p. 9.

³ *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 10-12.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 12-14.

its forms and events. In this wealth of reality we have to trace both the laws of all phenomena, and the Ideas which give worth to all being and doing.¹ The relation of reality, necessary laws, and Ideas of worth, must be organic. The true and complete teleology, according to Lotze's conviction, is that which recognizes reality as the field in which, and universal laws as the means by which, Ideas are realized. It is only at the close of the long argument of the *Mikrokosmos* that Lotze reaches this crowning conception, and feels that he has in some measure justified his belief that "the sphere of mechanism is unbounded, but its significance is everywhere subordinate."² He does not, however, leave the matter with quite the vagueness of this general conception. Closer examination shows, he maintains, "that in all the elements, a certain purposiveness in action not merely is compatible with, but ought hardly to be sundered from, the fundamental conceptions of the mechanical theory."³ Mechanism must needs assume an original nature of the elements, by virtue of which they manifest the properties characteristic of them. But grant that no action is merely external, that on the contrary the elements react according to their inner nature upon all stimulation from without, and you have opened a wide door for teleology. The possibility of an inherent purposiveness in things, of a tendency to evolve improving reactions, in a word, the possibility of progress towards a goal, becomes obvious.⁴

In the *Metaphysik*, Lotze links his teleology with his doctrine of the unity of all things in the World-Ground. Organic life, especially, implies purpose, and hence a conscious subject that conceives, wills, and realizes ends.⁵ Such a being can only be an immanent God. Law is intelligible only as the activity, the indwelling vitality, of the One Being, a real and potent presence in the innermost life of each element.⁶ But "the Absolute is no magician; it does not produce things in appropriate places out of a sheer vacuum."⁷ Rather it manifests itself in a plan which is developed according to a system of laws. Hence organic and

¹ *Mikr.*, 2 : p. 15.

² *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 618; cf. pp. 616-620.

³ *Mikr.*, 2 : p. 34.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 35-44.

⁵ *Met.*, §§ 229-31

⁶ *Met.*, §§ 230, 23

⁷ *Met.*, § 233.

inorganic being are everywhere dependent on what we term mechanical causes, and exhibit a law of progress or evolution. This conviction is the ground of Lotze's "obstinate refusal to see in all mechanism anything more than that form of procedure—susceptible of isolation in thought—which is given by the Highest Reality to the living development of its content, which content can never be exhaustively expressed by this form alone."¹

Thus his defense and exposition of the teleological view of nature leads us back to, and is grounded in, his fundamental assumption, that of the supremacy of the Good as dictating the forms and laws of reality. At least we may say that this is a brave attempt to solve a long-vexed problem. And in making the attempt Lotze in no wise minimizes the difficulties of the undertaking; his is no superficial teleology that wins an easy triumph. His correction of the mechanical conception, showing the inadequacy of a mere external mechanism; his insistence upon the universal validity of the mechanical principle rightly understood; the clearness with which he points out the incompleteness of mechanism as a final explanation, and his noble attempt to prove a teleological principle active in the world through the instrumentality of a universal mechanism, all are features which give to his work a great and lasting value. For Lotze's own generation this work had a special value which it can have for no other. In our day the echoes of the strife which the last generation waged for and against the claims of science, are dying away. Science no longer makes pretensions to give the final explanation of the world-order, nor is it any longer provoked into a hostile attitude by misapprehension and distrust. Yet the opposition between the real aspect of things, and the ideal view which seeks to interpret this order, is perennial; and for this reason Lotze's argument in behalf of teleology has permanent value for philosophy.

That the ultimate elements which compose the world are in their essential nature spiritual is a belief which Lotze held consistently throughout his life. It was the basis upon which he gave expression in all his important writings. It was this belief that he

himself held this conception to be an intrinsic and necessary element in his system ; to many it must seem accidental merely, a union of the poetic and the bizarre, the effect of which is rather to repel than to attract. It suggests the monadology of Leibniz, with some important modifications, however. The immaterial, soul-like atoms of Leibniz are isolated ; the monads ' have no windows,' each lives its life within itself, sustaining no reciprocal relation with others. The theory of a pre-established harmony involved in this conception is distasteful to Lotze ; it implies determinism, and denies to the monads the joy of active realization of ends. Such a world, he frequently repeats, would gain nothing by being realized.¹ His own monadology is explicitly based upon the concept of interaction, and presupposes the unity which Leibniz's world lacks.

The doctrine that the world is spiritual Lotze supports by two lines of argument, one of which is metaphysical, and the other ethical. He does not keep the two distinct, but passes over from the metaphysical argument to the ethical so easily as to suggest that the force of the latter is perhaps primarily greater with him, and influences his metaphysical theory to a degree of which he is unconscious. The metaphysical considerations which led Lotze to the doctrine in question, have to do with three closely related problems—that of the being of things, the unity of things, and the reciprocal action of things. These we will consider in brief before turning to the ethical argument.

In the *Metaphysik*, Lotze discusses at length the notion of the being or essence of the ' thing.' The first conclusion reached is that the ' thing ' is not to be identified with its qualities, whether these qualities be conceived as sensible or as supersensible.² A thing is more than the sum of its qualities, its essence is not in them ; the qualities change, none of them belong to the thing absolutely, but only under certain conditions. The thing is permanent in spite of changing states. All qualities are adjectives, and can be thought of only as predicates affirmed of a subject.³

¹ *Met.*, §§ 64-67.

² *Met.*, §§ 16-20 ; *Mikr.*, 3 : pp. 516-519.

³ *Outl. of Met.*, § 17.

Things can not *be* qualities, but can only *have* them.¹ But, on the other hand, neither is the essence of things to be sought in a kernel or substratum, itself void of qualities. A core of reality, quite void of properties, can not become the basis of qualities. All possibility of change in things, of their assuming new forms, depends upon their having determinate properties by which they offer definite points of contact to the conditions operating upon them. Furthermore, this conception implies a world of isolated and alien things, and hence denies order and connection by natural law.²

The positive conclusion following these negative results is that the nature of the thing is to be sought only in its modes of action. The mode of behavior of a thing is its essence. A thing is 'a law of change'; its being is activity, change within fixed limits and according to a method of procedure peculiar to itself.³ This result is significant for the point in question, since it argues that the ordinary notion of things, at least, needs modification and correction. If Lotze's reasoning is sound, the 'thing,' instead of being fixed and inert, is essentially active, a permanent subject of changing states.

This brings us to the consideration of the unity of the 'thing,' which is the next step in Lotze's conception of the nature of things, and affords his proof that this nature is spiritual. The 'thing' is ever changing, yet we are obliged to assume a certain unity in the midst of change.⁴ A 'thing' appears in a series of forms; the concept of change involves the necessity of regarding all members of this series as 'states' of one and the same abiding reality.⁵ The 'thing' then must be conceived as the "subject of its own predicates," the "support of its own properties," that which maintains itself as a unity in the midst of change. Only one kind of being can sustain such a relation to its states, and that

¹ *Outl. of Met.*, § 19.

² *Met.*, §§ 28-29.

³ *Cf. Met.*, §§ 24, 26, 32, 34.

⁴ *Outl. of Met.*, § 22; *Met.*, § 96.

⁵ *Outl. of Met.*, § 36. The term 'states' Lotze admits is not a good one, but he uses it in default of a better.

is spiritual being.¹ A thing can be a unity only by opposing itself as such to the multiplicity of its states; it can be distinct from its states only by distinguishing itself from them.² The only case of such unity in multiplicity that we know we find in our own inner life. The only real unity that we are able to think, therefore, is the unity of spirit; only spirit can be the subject of states.³ "It is the *spirit* only which solves this riddle by memory, which through a living coherence in one consciousness of what is really successive first reveals to us the only possible meaning for the aforesaid unity."⁴

Lotze's conclusion is, then, that "all that is real is mind."⁵ What we call 'things' are better than they seem. There is no need to posit two different kinds of being in the world—spirit and something different from spirit;⁶ on the contrary, there can be no other form of existence than "spiritual beings like ourselves, which, in feeling their states and opposing themselves to their states as the unity that feels, satisfy the idea of a permanent subject."⁷ The demands made by the notion of 'things' can be met only by that which is of the nature of mind. But a further problem presents itself in the notion of the interaction of things, and this problem likewise demands, in order to its solution, that things be conceived as spiritual beings. "*To be* is to stand in relations," Lotze repeatedly affirms.⁸ But to stand in relations can mean nothing else than reciprocal action.⁹ Everything stands in reciprocal relations with everything else. The very being of things consists in their sustaining these relations, in acting and being acted upon. This is the sole meaning of the activity which *is* the thing. But such reciprocal action of things implies the capacity of being affected and of producing effects.

¹ Cf. *Met.*, §§ 96–97; *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 521–523.

² *Met.*, § 96.

³ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 522.

⁴ *Outl. of Met.*, § 83.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 531.

⁶ *Outl. of Met.*, § 83; *Met.*, § 248.

⁷ *Met.*, § 97.

⁸ *Outl. of Met.*, § 10; *Mikr.*, 3: p. 465 *seq.*

⁹ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 524; *Met.*, § 82.

In other words, action implies passion, feeling. Interaction has no meaning when applied to unconscious existence ; it is only the being that feels that can receive impressions and react upon them.¹ In order to make intelligible the notion of the interaction of things, therefore, as well as their being and their unity, we are forced to assign to the 'thing' a spiritual nature.²

What shall we say as to the cogency of this metaphysical argument ? That it is not convincing must, I think, be generally granted. Lotze's analysis of the thing is not without value, certainly ; but the step by which he passes from the necessary unity of things to their spirituality is quite unwarrantable. By what right do we make the anthropomorphic assumption, that the reality outside us can exist only in the same form as that which we have learned through inner experience to know as the peculiarity of our own conscious spiritual nature ?³ Lotze in a measure forestalls this objection,⁴ maintaining that while anything that really exists may have its own mode of existence, yet we may not assume an unknown object of such a kind as would without reason conflict with the inferences we cannot avoid. The conception of the thing as commonly held is not of such value, he implies, that we need to maintain it at the cost of an appeal to a wholly unknown possibility. Moreover, if "such peculiarity of existence is asserted, the further predicates assigned to it must correspond" ; but Lotze believes that he has shown conclusively that unity and interaction, two concepts which we find ourselves obliged to attach to things, are inconsistent with any other form of existence than spirit. It is surely pertinent to reply that the thing is not unknown ; that, in so far as we know it, it does present itself as a unity, and as sustaining reciprocal relations with other things, but, on the other hand, that it never gives the least evidence of possessing psychical life. The burden of proof must rest with him who asserts that things are spirits, and Lotze cannot be said to have proved his case.

¹ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 525 ; Cf. *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 26, 83-84.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, 3 : pp. 547-548.

³ Cf. Hartmann : *Lotze's Philosophie*, p. 55.

⁴ *Met.*, § 98.

It is, perhaps, not without significance that Lotze finds himself obliged somewhat to modify his own conception in the course of his argument. His argument for the spirituality of all being hinges upon the fact that the thing must be conceived as the subject of changing states. Yet once, at least, he explicitly rejects this statement as inaccurate and misleading, and substitutes another which puts the matter in quite a different light. Instead of conceiving a as the subject of the states α , β , γ , through which it passes, he substitutes as a more exact statement that a , "while it is continuously changing, remains always within a 'closed series' of forms, every one of which can be transformed by means of definite conditions into every other, and no one of which can be transformed by means of any condition into any form foreign to this entire series."¹ Had Lotze held fast to this formulation, he would have found the transition to psychical life more difficult. The unity of the thing, as thus expressed, is by no means analogous to the unity of consciousness.

Nor should we forget that to appeal to our inner experience of unity in change, is not to adduce an explanation of this experience. In some manner inexplicable to us, we know that the manifold streams of our psychical life flow together in the unity of the self; but the unity of consciousness is far too involved in mystery to warrant our using it as a principle of explanation which may be applied to other phenomena. Moreover, this unity of our conscious life involves self-consciousness, which can not be predicated even of animals, to say nothing of things commonly termed inanimate. How far the animal may be a psychical unity we have small means of ascertaining. If unity depends on consciousness, it may well be questioned whether so low a grade of mentality as must be possessed by 'things,' if they possess mentality at all, could give the unity required by Lotze for the reality of the thing.

However convincing to Lotze's own mind these metaphysical considerations may have been, I cannot but think that the ethical argument constrained him to the belief that things are spiritual. Selfless things can have no value, no meaning for themselves.

¹ *Outl. of Met.*, § 36.

Only that can have value which never merely *is*, but is *for itself* (*für sich ist*), that is, knows, feels, enjoys, or possesses itself; and only spirit can meet this requirement.¹ Lotze's poetical imagination pictures a universe pulsing with joy throughout the whole range of being, each element contributing its own tone to swell the harmonious symphony which is the joy of the Infinite, to whom alone belongs full consciousness of self and of the whole. No part of the cosmos is blind and lifeless; the glow of feeling and enjoyment pervades all. "All pressure and tension undergone by matter, the rest of stable equilibrium, and the rending asunder of former connections, all this not only takes place, but also in taking place gives rise to some enjoyment."² It is to Lotze an incredible and revolting thought that 'things' exist merely to minister to souls; that one half of creation "has no function whatever save that of serving the other half."³ Why should there be, he asks, a world of things which themselves gain nothing by existing, but "would only serve as a system of occasions or means for producing in spiritual subjects representations which after all would have no likeness to their productive causes? Could not the creative power dispense with this round-about way, and give rise directly in spirits to the phenomena which it was intended to present to them? Could it not present that form of a world which was to be seen without the intervention of an unseen world which could never be seen as it would be if unseen?"⁴ Here, as in some other passages, Lotze seems haunted by the spectre of a Kantian world of things-in-themselves, alien and impenetrable to the perceiving mind. The alternative suggested—the explanation of phenomena given by subjective Idealism—Lotze elsewhere rejects as "an unconditional renunciation of all pretensions to knowledge."⁵

Objective Idealism, likewise, while it avoids the error of the former view, yet fails, according to Lotze, to give a satisfactory solution of the problem. By making things immanent in the Ab-

¹ Cf. *Outl. of Met.*, § 3.

² *Mikr.*, 1 : p. 406; Cf. pp. 405, 408, 445.

³ *Mikr.*, 1 : pp. 397-398.

⁴ *Met.*, § 97; cf. also 98.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 526; Cf. *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 78-83.

solute, in the sense that they are mere states or actions of the Absolute, without 'being-for-self,' it denies to them any true reality and grants them an apparent existence only.¹ Lotze's chief criticism of Idealism in this connection, is not that it denies objectivity or externality to things, but that nothing is gained for selfless things by such externality.² Idealism presents us, indeed, with an ordered world of things, objective for our cognition, but having only apparent reality because having no existence for self. Why not, Lotze asks, transform the assertion that only minds are real, into the assertion that all that is real is mind?³ To be real is to exist for self; but existence for self can be predicated only of the being that feels its own states, is the unitary subject of its states, and by just this which is its very essence, detaches itself in some measure from the Infinite. Hence 'realness,' 'real existence,' belongs to spiritual beings only, and to them in differing degrees. It reaches its highest stage in the self-conscious being that knows itself as an Ego, but "is not absent in the being which, though far removed from the clearness of such self-consciousness, yet in some duller form of feeling exists for itself and enjoys its existence."⁴

In the end, however, Lotze seems to deny to things the reality which he claims for them. There is an immense difference between the human spirit and the mere 'thing,' as to the degree to which each is able to 'detach itself from the Infinite.' Lotze finally declares that the true reality is conscious, personal spirit, "the living, personal spirit of God and the world of personal spirits which He has created."⁵ Again, Lotze states that "'real beings' are those of his actions that the Infinite permanently maintains as centers of out- and in-going effects that are susceptible of acting and of being affected; their reality consists . . . in this, that they as spiritual elements have *being-for-self*. This 'being for self' is the essential factor in that which we . . . designate as 'being outside the Infinite.' On the contrary, what we are accustomed to call 'things' and 'events' between

¹ *Metaphysik*, § 3 p. 310-312.

² *Metaphysik*, § 3 p. 314.

³ *Metaphysik*, § 3 p. 311.

other actions which the Highest Principle ~~various spirits~~ *spirits* so uniformly and in such coherency according to law that to these spirits there must appear to be one world of ~~substantial~~ and efficient 'things,' existing in space outside themselves. This is one of those perplexing statements by which Lotze frequently makes equivocal his position in the controversy between Realism and Idealism. It is quoted here to show that in the passage, at least, he seems to affirm 'being-for-self' only of self-conscious spirits, and to assert that the sole function of things is to produce in these spirits the appearance of an ordered universe.

It is obviously the ethical concept of value that determines Lotze to attribute a psychical life to things. Everything must have value, and not alone for other beings, but a value in itself. Value is apprehended in feeling; hence things must feel and enjoy their own existence. Von Hartmann pronounces Lotze's assertion that reality is 'being-for-self' quite arbitrary and unwarrantable;² but it is wholly in accord with the general idealistic conviction, surely, to maintain that in the highest and truest sense of the term, that only is *real* which is *for itself*, which has the power to set before it definite ends, and to realize itself in action. The truth of this view does not, however, carry with it the necessity of attributing a psychical life to things. Other alternatives are possible and preferable. We have seen that Lotze finds himself obliged to deny reality in the true sense of the term to things, even after he has endowed them with psychical life. Much more than mere feeling is essential for the existence of that 'being-for-self' which is synonymous with true reality. What value there can be in mere sentient feeling, and that the lowest and most confused possible, is by no means clear. The possibility of suffering, to which all sentient life is liable, does not seem to suggest itself to Lotze as a possible complication of the problem.

The doctrine that things are spirits is clearly rooted in the ethical presuppositions of Lotze's philosophy, though supported by metaphysical arguments as well. It is, perhaps, the most tenable of his characteristic doctrines, and one that the sympathetic reader would be glad to see eliminated from his system.

solute, in the sense that they are mere states or actions of the Absolute, without 'being-for-self,' it denies to them any true reality and grants them an apparent existence only.¹ Lotze's chief criticism of Idealism in this connection, is not that it denies objectivity or externality to things, but that nothing is gained for selfless things by such externality.² Idealism presents us, indeed, with an ordered world of things, objective for our cognition, but having only apparent reality because having no existence for self. Why not, Lotze asks, transform the assertion that only minds are real, into the assertion that all that is real is mind?³ To be real is to exist for self; but existence for self can be predicated only of the being that feels its own states, is the unitary subject of its states, and by just this which is its very essence, detaches itself in some measure from the Infinite. Hence 'realness,' 'real existence,' belongs to spiritual beings only, and to them in differing degrees. It reaches its highest stage in the self-conscious being that knows itself as an Ego, but "is not absent in the being which, though far removed from the clearness of such self-consciousness, yet in some duller form of feeling exists for itself and enjoys its existence."⁴

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¹ *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 532-537.

² *Mikr.*, 3: p. 534.

³ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 531.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 536.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 623.

other actions which the Highest Principle variously executes in all spirits so uniformly and in such coherency according to law, that to these spirits there must appear to be one world of substantial and efficient 'things,' existing in space outside themselves."¹ This is one of those perplexing statements by which Lotze not infrequently makes equivocal his position in the controversy between Realism and Idealism. It is quoted here to show that in this one passage, at least, he seems to affirm 'being-for-self' only of self-conscious spirits, and to assert that the sole function of 'things' is to produce in these spirits the appearance of an ordered universe.

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¹ *Outl. of Met.*, § 94; cf. *Mikr.*, 3: p. 530.

² Von Hartmann: *Lotze's Philosophie*, p. 62; cf. pp. 74-76.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCEPTION OF GOD: GOD AS THE WORLD-GROUND, AND AS INFINITE PERSONALITY.

THE notion of the Absolute must hold a place of chief importance in any comprehensive philosophical system. Lotze's conception of the Absolute, however, has a two-fold significance due to the two-fold object of his inquiry. The unity of all finite things in the World-Ground is the central doctrine of his metaphysics. From the metaphysical point of view it is complete in itself, it need appeal to no external source for the guarantee of its validity. But the metaphysical inquiry is never, with Lotze, the sole nor the chief aim. The world is predominantly ethical. More fundamental even than the primary facts of existence and the truths expressed in the universal law, is the reality of ethical values. The Absolute must for Lotze meet the requirements of a universe which, with all its diversity, is ethical to the core. It must be the ground of the real world and of the ethical meaning of that world. Impelled by this two-fold requirement, Lotze conceives the Infinite Being as the World-Ground and as complete Personality. When we have considered these two aspects of the Absolute separately, we may very properly ask whether Lotze has succeeded in uniting them in one Being, or whether, indeed, such a synthesis is possible. At present we will turn to the argument by which the unity of the metaphysical World-Ground is established.

The fact of change, or 'becoming,' must be regarded as fundamental. The 'thing,' as we have found, resolves itself into a spiritual being, the very essence of which is activity within fixed limits and in a definite manner which may be termed its law.¹ The concept of change is then unavoidable. But this concept is furthermore found to imply the union of the members

¹ *Met.*, Ch. III.

of the series in the relation of antecedent and consequent. The order of nature can not be conceived as a mere sequence ; the attempt to conceive it thus involves reason in serious difficulties and inconsistencies.¹ The concept of change must be supplemented by the concept of cause.

The next step is to show that the effect *c*, following from the action of *a* upon *b*, depends quite as much upon the nature of *b* as upon the nature and agency of *a* ; that is, causation implies reciprocal action. We have seen in the course of the discussion of mechanism that no element can be conceived as merely passive.² Nothing takes to itself any ready-made state merely as an accession to its own nature. On the contrary, everything responds according to its nature to every external stimulus. For example, a blow of exactly the same force produces very different effects upon different bodies : one it shivers into fragments ; one it sets into rhythmic vibrations ; in one it causes merely change of shape, and in another, violent explosion.³ Not only, however, does the action of *a* differ according as it is exerted upon *b*, *c*, or *d*, but in order that *a* may have an effect upon *b* at all, it must be induced to exercise this effect by being itself subject to an effect from *b*. The same is true of the causal action of *b* upon *a*, and so on *ad infinitum*. The reciprocal causation of all things must be regarded as "an eternal, uninterrupted matter of fact."⁴ None but an artificial view has attempted to deny the reciprocal action of things. Natural science is constrained to recognize it.⁵ The question is, how are we to apprehend it ? Immanent action—the development of state out of state within one and the same being—is ordinarily assumed as a matter of fact that requires no further effort of thought. It is really quite as inexplicable, however, as the action of one thing upon another.⁶

Lotze next proceeds to show that reciprocal action is impos-

¹ *Met.* § 43 ; *Outl. of Met.*, §§ 34, 35, 38.

² *Met.*, § 50.

³ *Outl. of Met.*, § 57.

⁴ *Outl. of Met.*, § 47. Cf. § 39. *Met.* § 45.

⁵ *Met.*, §§ 44, 51.

⁶ *Met.*, §§ 46–68.

ible between independent and self-subsisting beings. Hence, he argues, since causation in the form of interaction can not be denied, things are *not*, as they appear to be, independent, but rather are parts of and immanent in one Being, which is the World-Ground. This conclusion is reached negatively, by showing the inconceivability of any form of 'transeunt' action between two things regarded as independent. Cause cannot be conceived as taking place *between* things. It is commonly sought to explain the causal action of things as a transfer of an influence, a force, action, or state, ϵ , from a to b . The difficulties inherent in such a view become apparent as soon as we examine it closely. Why should a give off ϵ ? Why does ϵ take the direction $a-b$ rather than $a-c$, or any other? How are we to think ϵ in the interval, during its passage? Why, once the movement is initiated, should ϵ stop at b and become a state of the latter? The attempt to answer these queries makes it clear that the proposed explanation of causal action between two things as the passing over of an influence or force from one to the other, in truth assumes cause by assuming that a in some way initiates the movement and gives it the direction $a-b$, and that b receives and in some way takes unto itself the hypothetical traveller. "What we call such a transfer is nothing but a designation of that which has taken place in the still unexplained process of causation, or which may be regarded as its result."¹

If things are still to be conceived as independent, since 'transeunt' action is impossible, but two alternatives remain, those of 'Occasionalism,' and of a 'Preestablished Harmony.' The former is dismissed by Lotze with the minimum of consideration which it deserves. At best it can not be accepted as a metaphysical theory; it substitutes for explanation an arbitrary assumption.² The theory of a predetermined harmony of cosmic order, as held by Leibniz, receives from Lotze somewhat prolonged discussion.³ According to this theory the states of the different things accompany and correspond to one another, without having to be produced by reciprocal action. From a metaphys-

¹ *Met.*, § 56. Cf. *Mikr.*, 3: p. 484; *Outl. of Met.*, § 42.

² *Met.*, § 61.

³ *Met.*, §§ 63-67.

ical point of view Lotze objects to this on the ground that it also fails to explain the course of the world.¹ The problem is but referred back to an unintelligible preëstablishment of the world-order. Moreover, the Leibnizian world lacks unity; it is not a cosmos at all, but an aggregation of discrete and independent units, an infinity of worlds, indeed, corresponding to one another, but in no wise interrelated.²

There is but one resource left us,—to deny the independent existence of things, and to maintain that all elements are parts of a single real Being. Thus, so-called *transeunt* action becomes *immanent* action. Pluralism gives place to Monism. A first suggestion of the impossibility of Pluralism is afforded as soon as we recognize that the elements of the world are so related as to be comparable; but this rendered their origin or immanence in one Being probable, merely, not necessary. It is not till we search into the meaning of what we term cause and effect that the monistic view becomes a necessity for thought.³ If "causal action is to appear *possible*, this assumption of the independence of 'things' toward one another must be denied absolutely. A state which takes place in the element *a*, must for the very reason that it is in *a*, likewise be an affection of *b*. . . . The foregoing requirement can be met only by the assumption that all individual things are substantially one: that is to say, they do not merely become combined subsequently by all manner of relations, each individual having previously been present as an independent existence; but from the very beginning onward there are only different modifications of one individual Being which we propose to designate provisionally by the title of the Infinite, of the Absolute — *M*."⁴ Any change in *a* is at once, "without having to wait to become so," a change of *M*. So, also, this change in *M* "does not need to travel" to make its sign in *b*, it is already a change in *b* by virtue of the immanence of both *a* and *b* in *M*.⁵ *M* main-

¹ *Met.*, 66; cf. § 67, *Mikr.*, 3: p. 485.

² *Met.*, § 79.

³ *Met.*, § 69; *Philos. of Reüg.* §§ 17-18.

⁴ *Outl. of Met.*, § 48.

⁵ Von Hartmann's objection that *Le* viz., that in place of the effect of a upon

tains its identity with itself, and does not admit of a change in *a* without restoring the same nature *M* by the production of a compensatory change in *b*. The procedure which we conceive as the action of *a* upon *b*, is in truth the action of *M* upon itself.¹

The world must then be regarded as immanent in one Absolute Being, in which all finite things live, and move, and have their finite being. It is not the conception of an immanent God, but of an immanent world. Indeed, we have no right as yet to apply the name God, with its religious implications, to the World-Ground. The question as to how we are to conceive of the Absolute in itself and in its relation to finite things, is not very satisfactorily answered by Lotze. At least, it may be said that the difficulties that arise are not peculiar to his system. In a certain sense, Lotze says, all monistic systems amount merely to negation. That is, "they all deny the independent reality of finite things, but they can not determine positively the nature of the bond which unites them."² The relation of the One to the Many does not admit of determination in any positive way.³ Every individual thing exists in virtue not of any being of its own, but of the commission given it by the Absolute. It is what *M* charges it to be, and exists just so long as its particular being is required for the equation $M = M$. The mode and amount of its so-called operation upon other things is prescribed for it at each moment by *M*, for the re-establishment of the equation referred to.⁴ Only in so far as something has 'being-for-self,' is an object to itself, distinguishes itself from something else,—only in so far does it, by this very act, 'detach itself from the Infinite.' As we have seen, only spiritual beings can do this. Strictly speaking, only that being which can feel and assert itself *as a self* is so detached from the universal, all-comprehensive basis of being as to admit of being described as *outside* it; whatever has not

and of the Absolute upon *b*, seems to miss the mark. This very objection is rightly urged by Lotze himself against the conception of Leibniz. See von Hartmann: *Lotze's Philosophie*, p. 87; cf. *Mikr.* 3: p. 485.

¹Cf. *Met.*, § 70; *Philos. of Relig.*, § 19; *Outl. of Met.*, § 48; *Mikr.*, 3: p. 486.

²*Met.*, § 73.

³*Met.*, § 74.

⁴*Met.*, § 85.

this capability will always be included as 'immanent' within it.¹

As to the positive nature of the World-Ground, so far we seem warranted only in describing it as infinite activity, a constant becoming. It is an eternally present condition of action. It can not be conceived as ever really existing in the general form indicated by the sign M . It really exists at each moment only as a case, having a definite value, of the equation expressed by the formula $M = \varphi(ab \dots r)$, which formula indicates that a certain definite connection of the elements of the world, φ , exhibits, at this moment, the whole nature of M .² In this form it is at the same time "the efficient cause of the actuality of the state next-ensuing, as well as the conditioning ground of what this state contains."³ Thus the unity of M is conceived as active, dynamic. If a sensible image is needed, such is furnished, Lotze says, by the many simultaneous parts of a piece of polyphonic music; each compels all the rest to vary in harmony with itself and all the others, forming a series of movements that result in the unity of a melody which is consistent and complete in itself.⁴ Again, Lotze conceives the Absolute Being as the unity of a *living idea*, "the import of which . . . is no mere aggregate of ideas, but a self-articulated whole of variously interwoven parts; each one of these parts, as well as the several elements which comprise it, acquiring a determinate quantity according to its value and position in the whole."⁵

Lotze constantly guards himself against the misapprehension that he assigns a definite, positive meaning to the terms by which he designates the Absolute and seeks to express its relation to finite being. Thus he says the elasticity or self-maintenance that we ascribe to the Absolute is not a conception to which a definite meaning can be attached. It is used merely "as a not unimag-

¹ *Met.*, § 98. Cf. *Philos. of Relig.*, § 41.

² *Met.*, § 70, 79, 82.

³ *Met.*, § 82.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Met.*, § 195. By this statement, and others similar to it, Lotze approaches the Hegelian conception, and suggests that his own metaphysical view is in truth far less opposed to that of Hegel than he deems it to be. See also Wm. Wallace: *Lectures and Essays*, pp. 482, 510.

inable expression to which different significations may be given." Least of all does he wish to represent the reactions of the Absolute in a merely mechanical way, as directed to the preservation of the *status quo*; instead, "we might assume even an impulse of development in progress towards a definite goal."¹

We have now before us, in somewhat meager outline, the argument by which Lotze seeks to establish the unity of things in the World-Ground. In criticising it we should be careful, I think, to distinguish those difficulties which pertain to Lotze's own doctrine, from those which are common to all monistic systems. Every monism is open to the charge, on the one hand, that the Absolute is but the aggregation of its finite parts, and, on the other, that the finite is engulfed and lost in the Absolute, that 'lion's lair' which many footsteps enter, but from which none emerge. It may be, indeed, that this difficulty is enhanced in both its aspects in the philosophy of Lotze, because of his insistence on the personality of both the Infinite and of the finite, yet at bottom it is the old problem and is in no wise peculiar to Lotze's monism. It is the writer's intention to confine the discussion, so far as is possible, to that which is distinctive of the view we are considering.

Much of the criticism of Lotze seems somewhat captious. The writer, at least, is unable to agree with those who pronounce his metaphysics quite arbitrary, and lacking in critical acumen and logical consistency.² Every metaphysics must be in so far arbitrary that it must have some starting point and in its development imply certain definite conceptions. Few thinkers have reached their conclusions by more cautious reasoning than Lotze. His analysis of cause as a determination by reciprocal action is one of the most valuable of his positive contributions to metaphysical thought, and is a most conclusive argument against empiricism which substitutes a mere sequence for causal connection.

Let us see, however, in just how far Lotze's monism affords an explanation of the connection of things. With the single ex-

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 20.

² See *Lange's History of Materialism*, tr. by Thomas, II, 285; F. C. S. Schiller: "Lotze's Monism," *Philos. Rev.*, 1896, pp. 225 ff.

ception that the Unitary Being is to be conceived as active, its nature is undetermined. The designation of *M* as a unity, Lotze expressly states, contains no explanation whatever of the precise sort of unity which obtains; it has rather the distinct negative meaning which denies the self-dependence of individual things. No definite meaning can be attached to that action of the Absolute upon itself which appears to us as the reciprocal action of things. The use of the terms 'reciprocal action' and 'interaction,' indeed, becomes misleading.¹

The proof by which the unity of things is established is a negative one, resting upon the disproof of the possibility of reciprocal action between things wholly independent and unrelated. The immanent action which is substituted for 'transeunt' action is, however, quite as incomprehensible as the latter. Early in his discussion Lotze points out that the connection of states *within* one and the same being is really no better understood than the relation of cause and effect *between* two beings, though ordinarily assumed as needing no explanation.² So at the end, when all action is shown to be immanent action, the real nature of this immanent action of the Absolute, *M*, is quite inexplicable. How *M* initiates action, how a state or affection of *a* is at once an affection of *b*, but not of *c*,—these questions are unanswerable. In substituting immanent action for 'transeunt' action, we have then gained by so much, namely, for an hypothesis which is self-contradictory, and therefore unthinkable, we have substituted an hypothesis which is inexplicable, but not unthinkable. Lotze's monism is in a general sense, at least, intelligible. If we are dissatisfied, and think that it stops short of a final explanation, we may do well to ponder Lotze's words, so often repeated, that we cannot expect to learn 'how the world is made.' The world *is*, and is constituted in a particular way. To ask *how* causal action is produced, is as futile as to ask why

¹ One critic goes so far as to say that Lotze has not only stripped the term reciprocal action of all meaning, but has come perilously near destroying the notion of connection according to law, and substituting therefor a lawless mutability of the Absolute. See Krestoff: *Lotze's metaphysischer Seelenbegriff*, pp. 77-78.

² *Met.*, §§ 46, 68.

there is a world at all, why its content is *M*, and why the action of *M* is as it is.¹

We would seem to be warranted in the conclusion that Lotze has succeeded in proving the necessary unity of things. He has done this by a method of exclusion, rejecting one hypothesis after another as inadequate, until at length the sole remaining alternative is that of unity. "It was not necessary," he says, "that the unity of all individual beings should be conjectured or discovered as an hypothesis enabling us to set aside difficulties that are in our way. It is, it seems to me, a thought which by mere analysis can be shown to be involved in the conception of reciprocal action."² Lotze has, I think, proved conclusively the impossibility of interaction between unrelated and wholly independent beings. This certainly implies the connection of things in a system, which in turn implies some kind of a unity. The nature of this unity the metaphysical argument so far traced leaves indefinite, to be discovered only by further investigation.

Having shown that cosmological speculation leads inevitably to the positing of one Infinite Being as the Ground of all that is, Lotze proceeds to identify this Absolute with the religious conception of God, and to attribute to this Being absolute goodness and complete personality. In doing this, Lotze has left himself open to the criticism that he has spanned by a single bold leap the gulf between the metaphysical Absolute and the personal God. An Absolute is not a God, it may be said, and to identify the two summarily is not to solve the problem of their unity in one Being. While feeling the force of this criticism, the writer believes that the transition is really not so abrupt as it seems. It is true that in the *Mikrokosmos* Lotze begins his discussion of the personality of God by stating that he will now turn to the development of the idea of the Infinite as contained already in religious thought, that he will take as the object of reflection, "not the metaphysical postulate of the Infinite, but instead of it the full and complete concept of the God who is to realize this pos-

¹ Cf. *Met.*, § 83; *Outl. of Met.*, § 48.

² *Met.*, § 71; cf. § 69.

tulate."¹ Notwithstanding this and other similar statements, the writer feels it necessary to take exception to the assertion that Lotze makes no attempt to show that the Unity of Things, as discovered by metaphysics, must be susceptible of religious predicates.² The *Outlines of the Philosophy of Religion*, brief and condensed as it is, shows a very evident, and, in good measure, a successful attempt to unite the metaphysical and religious concepts in one, not by merely bringing them together, but by showing that our concept of the Infinite is manifestly incomplete when lacking either the metaphysical or the ethical attributes. This view of the matter, if the true one, will appear more clearly as we follow Lotze's development of his doctrine.

As we have already seen, the argument based on the fact of the reciprocal action of things warrants only the assumption of the necessary unity of the Absolute. What this Absolute is, is left for further determination. The conception of the Infinite so far made use of "merely designates a postulate in a provisional way . . . how we are to conceive of this Infinite itself . . . is reserved for subsequent investigation."³ The *Philosophy of Religion*, in seeking further to ascertain the nature of the Supreme Being, starts out from this datum derived from metaphysics.⁴ The time-honored 'proofs' of the existence of God, Lotze finds as destitute of demonstrative force as did Kant before him.⁵ They fail severally to establish that which they attempt, and together they fail to bring us to the personality of the Infinite. As the teleological argument had for Kant a peculiar attraction, so the ontological argument appeals to Lotze as rich in significance, though falling short of demonstration.⁶ Since these arguments fail us, says Lotze, "we will find our point of departure in a simpler datum," and "attempt to deduce from it, not exactly the existence of God, but a more modest conclusion, which shall serve us as a preliminary condition for that other conclusion."⁷

¹ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 549.

² F. C. S. Schiller : "Lotze's Monism," *Philos. Rev.*, 1896, pp. 237-238.

³ *Outl. of M.t.*, § 48; cf. *Philos. of Relig.*, § 20.

⁴ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 19.

⁵ *Philos. of Relig.*, §§ 6-14; *Mikr.*, 3 : pp. 554-562.

⁶ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 6; *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 561.

⁷ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 16.

This datum is in substance the assumption that all the elements of the world act upon one another, each exerting influence upon the rest, and in turn receiving influence from all. This leads us to the conclusion of the metaphysics, that is, the necessary assumption of a Unit Being, or World-Ground.

In seeking 'more precise determinations of the Absolute,' we are met first by the query whether the Absolute is to be conceived as Matter or as Spirit.¹ That the latter is the true alternative is decided by Lotze on the ground that a spiritual principle is necessary in order to spiritual processes. Psychology compels us to the conviction that states of motion are the occasions upon which there arise in us spiritual processes, such as sensations and affections. But it is impossible to say that these states of motion ever transmute themselves into sensations and affections. So far as our knowledge goes, from physical processes only physical processes can originate. Physical and psychical processes are disparate.² For Lotze's own metaphysical theory this argument has a wider significance even than the foregoing, since the world is conceived by him as spiritual throughout, and certainly a material principle—if such were conceivable from his point of view—"would be in no condition to produce from itself the world of spiritual processes."³

There are "two distinct series of attributes through which man tries to comprehend the being of God. . . . Metaphysical attributes of Unity, Eternity, Omnipresence, and Omnipotence, determine Him as the ground of all finite reality; ethical attributes of Wisdom, Justice, and Holiness satisfy our longing to find in that which has supreme reality, supreme worth also."⁴ Thus, man seeks "to blend the Existent and the Worthy into the notion of the living God."⁵ At this point in the *Mikrokosmos*, Lotze regards the notion of a Personal God as a goal

¹ See *Philos. of Relig.*, §§ 21-26.

² *Philos. of Relig.*, § 22.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 563; *Philos. of Relig.*, §§ 27-31. In the *Philos. of Relig.*, the predicate of Unchangeableness is added to the above list of metaphysical attributes. Eternity and Unchangeableness seem, however, to reduce to the same conception. See §§ 28-31.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 562.

already reached, and goes on to defend this against doubts as to its possibility. In the *Philosophy of Religion*, however, he supplies an immediate link which goes far to refute those who maintain that the transition from the metaphysical to the religious conception of the Infinite is quite arbitrary and abrupt. There he states that "if the predicates of 'unconditionateness' [that is, the metaphysical predicates] are to be valid for the Highest Being, then one condition of this validity lies precisely in the addition of a last formal predicate, namely, that of Personal Existence."¹ It is to be regretted that Lotze did not further develop this thought; it seems very probable that he would have done so had the work upon which he was engaged at the time of his death been brought to completion. When we remember that he regarded unity as conditioned by spiritual existence, and being-for-self as the essence of reality, that thing being in the highest degree *real* which possesses such being-for-self in the fullest measure, we have some suggestions at least as to the direction his development of this idea would take.

Lotze considers briefly certain attempts which have been made to frame a concept of an impersonal Infinite, all of which he believes have failed. He recalls with what noble motives and moral earnestness Fichte opposed a crude anthropomorphism, and sought to dissolve the notion of God in that of a moral World-Order. Yet Fichte was wrong. When thought out, the idea of a World-Order resolves itself into that of a Being that orders. No order is separable from the ordered material in which it is realized; the order must ever be a relation of something which exists. Our search is for a Real Being—the ground of all reality—not a relation. "Hence it is nothing but *order*, as its name says, it is never *that which orders*, which is what we seek, and which the ordinary notion of God (however inadequate in other respects) determined rightly at any rate in this."²

Against the notion of the Absolute as self-developing Idea, Lotze urges strenuous objections. We have had occasion frequently to notice his antagonism to Hegel. On this point he believes that the Hegelian concept of the Absolute excludes personality. The

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 33.

² *Mikr.*, 3: p. 565; cf. 567-68; See Lohan: *Die Gottesidee Lotzes*, p. 22.

truth of this interpretation need not concern us ; it is one which meets both support and dissent from numerous critics and champions of Hegelianism. As we have seen, to make an Idea supreme seemed to Lotze to deify thought and to ignore value. He further urges an objection similar to that brought against a World-Order as the ultimate reality : An Idea "is and remains nothing more than the statement of a thought-formula by which we fix, as an aid to reflection, the inner connection between the living activities of the Real."¹ That is, it signifies a *relation*, merely ; it does not give us Reality. Like the notion of a World-Order, the Idea has no content ; it is not reality, and it lacks dynamic power to produce reality.

There are three distinct lines of argument by which Lotze seeks positively to establish the personality of God. The Infinite must be a person in order to be the ground of finite personality ; the source and ground of the moral order and moral ideals must be sought in a personality ; and, finally, reality can be predicated only of that which exists as personality. These are all suggested rather than fully and clearly developed, however. Only the last is in any sense peculiar to Lotze's view, and this follows directly from his metaphysics.

Throughout his works Lotze emphasizes the value and dignity of the individual personality. The human spirit can not be regarded as wholly dependent on the course of nature, a mere product of nature which transiently appears and then vanishes, as a thing of no intrinsic worth. The history of mankind, a history of struggle and achievement, of progress from the low and brutish to ever-increasing fullness of spiritual life, constrains us to reverence the human nature that is ours, and to believe in its high calling. That distinguishing endowment of the human mind—the "capacity of becoming conscious of the Infinite"²—would seem to imply that its source and its object are to be found in something akin to the human mind itself. Is it not far from probable that "the Absolute, of itself unconscious and impersonal, produces even in its blind development the favoring

¹ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 574.

² *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 341-342.

conditions under which its own products, the finite spirits, developed the personality denied to itself?"¹ Indeed, Lotze boldly asserts that the burden of proof must rest with those who deny, rather than with those who affirm, the personality of the Infinite.

But, furthermore, we find ourselves under the necessity of making intelligible from a single real principle the moral order of the world and the fact that it furnishes us with obligatory ideals of the Good.² Quoting the words of Fichte, Lotze says: "It is not doubtful, 'but most certain and indeed the ground of all other certainty, that there is this moral order of the world, that for every intelligent creature there is an appointed place and a work which he is expected to perform, and that every circumstance of his lot is part of a plan, in independence of which not a hair of his head can be harmed . . . that every good action will succeed and every evil action certainly fail, and that to those who do but truly love that which is good all things shall work together for good.'"³ But if the notion of any active order necessarily and inevitably leads back to that of an Ordering Being, the notion of a moral order leads further. Only a conscious and moral Being can impart to the cosmic course the impulses by which is established the thorough-going dominion of what is good.⁴ If we regard the cosmos as moral, as we seem forced to do, then "Personality is the only conceivable form of its Supreme Cause."⁵

We have said that the third argument, namely, that personality is the only Real, is the only one that is peculiar to Lotze's view, and that is directly connected with his metaphysical doctrine. Spiritual life, as we have seen, is for him the only form of real existence. The unity of that which we call a 'thing,' its coherency according to law, would be impossible, save as pertaining to a spiritual subject. But the essence of spiritual life is 'being-for-self'; real existence then is that only which has worth in and for itself. But while all reality is such by virtue of 'being-for-self,' different

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 26.

² *Philos. of Relig.*, § 26.

³ Fichte: *Sämmtliche Werke*, V, p. 188. Cf. also *Mikr.*, 3: p. 566.

⁴ Cf. *Mikr.*, 3: p. 567.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 568.

forms of reality possess this attribute in different degrees. Only that being which apprehends itself as a self or ego is truly real, and the Supreme Reality must possess in the highest possible degree the 'Being-for-self' which is synonymous with Reality. Finite spirits share the reality of the Infinite, but the Infinite alone is truly Real and truly an Ego.¹ The highest form of 'being-for-self' that we know is personality; ought we not, therefore, to attribute the same to the Absolute Real in the highest and, indeed, the only perfect degree?

Certain considerations have, however, led to an unwillingness on the part of many thinkers to attribute personality to the Infinite. It has, indeed, "become almost an axiom that personality is a category of finite being only."² This view is based upon certain conceptions as to the necessary relation of the Ego and Non-Ego. An Ego is not thinkable, its advocates affirm, except in contrast with a Non-Ego; hence, to assert personal existence of God is to limit his Being, to condition Him by something not Himself.³ The foregoing proposition, says Lotze, is susceptible of three interpretations. The first two of these seem to run together, however, and we may consider them as one. The first interpretation, therefore, is this: The Ego has significance only as contrasted with the Non-Ego, and can be experienced only in such contrast.⁴ To this Lotze makes answer that Ego and Non-Ego are not merely two correlative terms, having no meaning apart from each other. Each can not owe its whole content to the other, else both would remain without content. One of the two must be independently determined. By the usage of language the Ego alone has its own independent name; the Non-Ego is only the negative determination which excludes the Ego without indicating any positive content of its own. But quite apart from what is implied in language, the Ego is the positive, referring to the immediate self-feeling "by which the Ego positively apprehends what belongs to it as *its own*, and on the other hand, at first excludes from itself in a merely negative way what

¹ Cf. *Mikr.*, 3: p. 623, also pp. 615-619.

² Pfleiderer: *Lotze's philosophische Weltanschauung*, p. 59; cf. *Mikr.*, 3: p. 564.

³ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 509.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 570.

does not belong to it.”¹ The primary basis of personality is in immediate self-existence, and herein alone do we find the basis of the possibility of the contrast of Ego and Non-Ego.² We have already seen in another connection that Lotze makes feeling the basis of self-consciousness. Referring to this, he says that “this discussion showed us that all self-consciousness rests upon the foundation of the direct sense of self, which can by no means arise from becoming aware of a contrast with the external world, but is itself the reason that this contrast can be felt as unique, as not comparable to any other distinction between two objects.”³

It is the second interpretation, however, which posits the weightiest objection to belief in a Personal God. This may be stated as follows: The Ego is conditioned by the existence and active influence of a Non-Ego; personality can not be produced even in a being whose nature is capable of it without the coöperative and educative influences of an external world.⁴ Personality is unthinkable, therefore, as an attribute of the Infinite; it has meaning only when ascribed to finite beings. Stimulus from the external world, through the avenues of the senses, must awaken the mind to activity, and develop personality, or self-existence, which is otherwise only potential.

But while it is true that the incitements to its action come to it from without, even the finite being is in part self-conditioned; the forms of its activity proceed from its own inner nature, and “neither the content of its sensations nor its feelings, nor the peculiarity of any other of its manifestations, is given to it from without.”⁵ But if finite personality can not be regarded as wholly determined by incitements from a source external to itself, to a much greater degree is it absurd to assume that personality as attributed to the Infinite Being implies such determination. The transference of the conditions of finite personality to the Infinite is quite without justification. Such transference assumes that what is true of the finite must necessarily hold of the Infin-

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 38; Cf. *Mikr.*, 3: p. 570.

² *Mikr.*, 3: pp. 571, 579-580.

³ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 571.

⁴ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 573.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 3: p. 575.

ite ; it ignores the distinction which we invariably make in every other case between the finite and the Absolute, the conditioned and the Unconditioned. The finite being requires the Non-Ego, not because it needs the contrast with something alien, but because it does not contain within itself the conditions of its own existence. The Infinite comprehends within itself all that is finite, and is the cause of its nature and reality. It does not need that its activity "should be called forth by external stimuli, but from the beginning its concept is without that deficiency which seems to us to make such stimuli necessary for the finite being, and its active efficiency thinkable."¹ The Infinite Being is wholly self-sufficing, and possesses within itself the conditions of its own development. "That which is only approximately possible for the finite, the conditioning of its life by itself, takes place without limit in God, and no contrast of the external world is necessary for Him."² To conceive of the Absolute as thus the ground of spiritual and self-conscious activities, is to make no greater demand upon the imagination than is made by every materialistic or pantheistic view, or even by any physical explanation of the world.³

There follows from the preceding argument a conclusion which is the exact opposite of the usual one : "*Perfect* personality is reconcilable only with the conception of an Infinite Being ; for finite beings only an approximation to this is attainable."⁴ The finite mind is a constituent of a whole ; it has a definite place in the cosmos, and is, therefore, subject to limitations. Not only must its activities be awakened by successive stimuli, so that the whole self can never be brought together at one moment of time, but also its inner life follows the laws of a psychical mechanism in accordance with which its activities are inevitably exercised. The finite being never knows itself as a comprehensible unity, neither at any moment of time nor in a retrospect which includes the entire temporal course of its life. It approximates, but never quite attains, the ideal unity which it posits as its self. There is

¹ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 575.

² *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 576. Cf. 3 : p. 580 ; *Philos. of Relig.*, §§ 39-40.

³ Cf. *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 577 ; *Philos. of Relig.*, § 40.

⁴ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 41. Cf. *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 580.

an obscure core of being it can never bring into complete self-consciousness. It finds the mystery within more inscrutable by far than that of the world without. In point of fact, Lotze concludes, the personality of finite beings "is an ideal, which, like all that is ideal, belongs unconditionally only to the Infinite, but . . . appertains to us only conditionally, and hence imperfectly."¹

We have considered the two aspects under which Lotze conceives the Absolute Being,—the metaphysical Absolute, or World-Ground, and the Personal God, the concept of religion. An attempt has been made to show that he does not hold these conceptions apart or bring them together in a merely external union. On the contrary, the concept of metaphysical unity requires that this unity be conceived under the form of personality. The metaphysical inquiry, as we have seen, leads to the positing of a Unitary Being as the World-Ground. This concept is at first, however, merely negative. It gives no indication of the positive content of the World-Ground, it asserts only that the elements of the world are not to be conceived as isolated and independent. But thought cannot rest in a merely negative determination. In the effort to determine positively the nature of the ultimate reality, Lotze is forced to attribute to it a spiritual and self-conscious existence. The metaphysical concept of the unity of things is intelligible only if this unity be conceived as a spiritual and self-conscious Being. The only conceivable unity is the unity of consciousness, the only conceivable reality is the reality of self-existence. Here is the link in Lotze's argument which warrants the identification of the metaphysical Absolute with the Personal God. Whether or not we assent to the implied metaphysical doctrines which are peculiar to Lotze's view, we cannot fail to admit the force and clearness of the argument. The concept of a Personal Absolute undoubtedly does make the unity of the world more intelligible. We have in ourselves the experience of a unity which comprises all its parts, and which is something more and other than the mere sum of them all. This experience makes it possible for us in some

¹ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 579 ; also pp. 577-578. Cf. Royce: *The Conception of God*, pp. 272-273.

measure to conceive of the relation between the Infinite Spirit and the finite beings that constitute the world.

The metaphysical inquiry in itself, then, leads to the conclusion that the ultimate Reality must be spiritual and self-conscious, predicates which we know only in personal beings. Since personality is an ethical category, we see again that in a very literal sense the ethical underlies the metaphysical in Lotze's philosophy. In that the Absolute is spiritual, an Ego, conscious of self and in the fullest degree self-determined, it is essentially ethical. The same conclusion is likewise reached by quite another line of argument, which follows in general the reasoning by which it is ordinarily sought to establish the personality of God. The ethical and religious consciousness ascribes to the Infinite a supreme worth and goodness, which can be realized only in a Person. This practical demand Lotze recognizes as quite as legitimate as the speculative. Both are rooted deep in human nature. The metaphysical inquiry has its source in man's apprehension of an ordered universe, the religious and ethical inquiry in his appreciation of values. The Absolute must be of such a nature as to be the ground and source of all values. Supreme Reality and supreme Worth must be united in the Highest Being. As Lotze conceives the goal of human conduct to be benevolence, so he believes the Infinite is most fitly designated as 'Living Love' that 'wills the blessedness' of all dependent beings, and by the continual outflowing of active energy sustains and fills all finite existence with its own abounding life.

Lotze's conception of God as the true and complete personality, of which human personality is but the finite and imperfect copy, seems far more intelligible than the assertion, so often made, that the Infinite is *more* than personality, so much more that it is misleading to apply the term. This affirmation carries always the implication that the Infinite is quite *other* than personality; whereas it is surely reasonable to suppose that man—the highest thing that we know, that which the whole creation has travailed to produce and to perfect—affords the best index of the nature of the Highest Being. Man's distinguishing characteristic is Reason, self-conscious and worth-appreciative Reason. This in-

cludes, I think, all that Lotze means by personality. Reason, as we know it, is always self-conscious and worth-appreciative. In Lotze's own words, we have no right to strip from Reason the predicates we always find attached to it, and persuade ourselves that aught intelligible remains.¹ The term personality as applied to the Infinite is probably no more inadequate than any of the other terms by which we seek to designate this Being. Since we are finite beings ourselves, all the symbols that we invent must derive their meaning from what is finite, and must therefore fail signally when applied to the Infinite.²

If now the question be asked in how far Lotze's conception of the Absolute is determined by ethical and religious considerations, our answer must take cognizance of the two-fold significance of this conception. The concept of the Absolute as the World-Ground rests upon a purely speculative basis. So, at least, Lotze himself affirms in terms that admit of no ambiguity. At the close of his metaphysical discussion, he says: "Though I am old-fashioned enough not to be indifferent to the religious interests which are involved in these problems, the views for which I have been contending rest on a purely scientific basis, quite without reference to religion. No course of things, whether harmonious or discordant, seems to be conceivable except on the supposition of this unity which alone makes possible the reciprocal action of individual existences."³ This and other statements to the same effect leave no doubt as to Lotze's belief and intention that his metaphysical doctrine should rest on logical proofs.

The concept of the Absolute as Infinite Personality is reached in two ways: It is first the logical consequence and implication of Lotze's metaphysical doctrine. In order to be the World-Ground the Absolute must be a personal Being. But the personality of the Absolute is likewise necessary in order to explain the facts of the realm of values. Here moral and æsthetic ideals, the ethical presuppositions of theoretical ideals,

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 24.

² Cf. Fiske: *Through Nature to God*, pp. 157-159.

³ *Met.*, § 233; cf. § 84.

the recognition of a moral world-order, the religious aspiration for a supreme object of love and veneration—all have their place, and contribute to that practical demand for a personal God which it is the chief aim of Lotze's philosophy to justify and to establish as objectively valid.

Though prompted by different motives, the speculative and practical inquiries reach the same goal, namely, the concept of a supreme Person who is at once the ground and source of all Reality, all Truth, and all Good.

CHAPTER V.

CONCEPTION OF THE NATURE OF MAN : MAN AS A MECHANISM AND AS A PERSONALITY.

IN the introduction to the *Mikrokosmos*, we find Lotze disclaiming any attempt to set forth in a complete and comprehensive manner the system of the universe. Profoundly impressed with the limitations of human reason, he always distrusted the methods and conclusions of system-building philosophers. Kronenberg says very truly that Lotze's philosophy is anthropocentric in its standpoint.¹ It is characteristic of Lotze's attitude that he approaches the philosophical problem in the interests of man, not confident of a full solution, but hopeful of gaining an insight that shall answer the more urgent questions as to the meaning of man's life. The more deeply the features of the great world-picture impress themselves upon consciousness, the "more vividly will they point us back to ourselves, and stir up anew the question—What significance have man and human life with its constant phenomena, and the changing course of history, in the great whole of Nature."² The very title of the *Mikrokosmos*, and its modest sub-title, *An attempt at an Anthropology*, indicate the importance of the place held by man in Lotze's conception of the total system of things. This work, which is the most comprehensive statement of his philosophy, has for its express aim the task of ascertaining the nature of man and his relation to the cosmos.

The problem of man's being is, in its widest aspect, the problem we have already discussed as regards the universe as a whole, namely, that of the mechanical *versus* the ideal view. Is man a mechanism, differing from other mechanisms only in degree of complexity? Are his physical and mental life, his ethical and

¹ Kronenberg : *Moderne Philosophen*, pp. 23-25.

² *Mikr.*, XV-XVI.

social activities, wholly explicable by mechanical laws? Or must we, in order adequately to explain these complex and varied phenomena, have recourse to a principle quite other than mechanical? This is the real problem of the *Mikrokosmos*, and the answer to it will be found to involve Lotze's answer to every question concerning the nature of man and the meaning of human life. We are prepared to find a generous admission of the mechanical point of view as affording a partial explanation of the phenomena in question, but a firm denial that the mechanical explanation is ultimate.

From the beginning of his scientific labors to the close of his philosophical career, Lotze insisted upon the prevalence of mechanism in the body. Even in the works which preceded the *Medizinische Psychologie*, this view is set forth and defended with clearness and vigor.¹ Later, in connection with his philosophical theory, he but recapitulates—to use his own term—the conclusions thus early developed, for the purpose of calling attention to the fact that a complete view must show how the mechanical conception of vital phenomena harmonizes with the requirements of the ideal view which philosophy never ceases to urge.²

In some form or other there has always existed a reluctance to admit that the origin of life and the processes of life are to be accounted for by ordinary mechanical laws. This reluctance has been based not alone upon ethical and religious grounds, but upon theoretical considerations as well, and has afforded inducement to postulate a 'vital principle' of some sort, dependent in a general sense upon material conditions, but superior to the physical and chemical laws which dominate matters.³ While sympathizing in some measure with the motives which lead to this view, Lotze unhesitatingly denies the conclusion. The assumption of a superior principle in organic bodies which presides over and effects vital phenomena, is both unnecessary and inadequate for the explanation of such phenomena. It is unnecessary; for our analysis never reaches the point where we can pronounce with

¹ See *Lebenskraft*, 1843, and *Seele und Seelenleben*, 1846, both published in Rudolph Wagner's *Handwörterbuch der Physiologie*. Also *Allgemeine Physiologie des körperlichen Lebens*, 1851.

² *Met.*, § 224.

³ Cf. *Met.*, §§ 224–225.

assurance that the limit of mechanical efficiency is found, and that now a new principle must be summoned to our aid. Mechanism in the widest sense of the term includes every case in which effects are produced by the reciprocal action of different elements of whatever kind, working in accordance with universal laws.¹ When used in this sense, it becomes evident that there is nowhere any exception to the dependence of life on mechanical causes.² Everywhere we find the interaction of parts in accordance with fixed law. Moreover, the assumption of another and higher principle is inadequate for the explanation of vital phenomena, and raises insuperable difficulties. It must needs be quite impotent unless it works by means of just such a system of laws as it is meant to supersede. "It is not obvious where such a force could be inherent, unless in the sum of living parts and their systematic combinations; it is not obvious how it should come to alter its mode of operation and at each moment effect what is necessary, so long as we do not suppose that by regular necessity it becomes different, and works differently under altered circumstances, like every force which is the result of a variety of changeable parts."³

In short, Lotze concludes, a mechanical method is absolutely necessary in order to explain the connection of vital phenomena. Life is derived "not from some peculiar principle of action, but from a peculiar mode of utilizing the principles which govern the whole physical world."⁴ To maintain this, however, is not to deny that the forms of organic life exhibit purpose, nor is it to degrade them to the level of mere machines.⁵ The first book of the *Mikrokosmos* aims to show that we do not need to assume a special life-principle, but that the structure of the body, the structure and functions of the various organs, and the conservation of life are to be explained by reference to mechanical causes.⁶

¹ *Met.*, § 227.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, I: p. 80; *Met.*, § 233.

³ *Mikr.*, I: p. 84; Cf. *Met.*, § 227.

⁴ *Met.*, § 229.

⁵ On the differences between the living body and the machine compare *Mikr.*, I: pp. 80-83; *Met.*, § 228.

⁶ Cf. Kronenberg: *Moderne Philosophen*, pp. 25-26; Pfeleiderer: *Lotze's philosophische Weltanschauung*, pp. 14-17.

The steady advance of scientific research would seem to warrant Lotze's conclusion that, however far our analysis may be pushed, we should still find that the ends of life are served by the application of nature's general means with which we are already familiar.¹ In the movable framework of the body, as well as in the action of the muscles, we find exhibited in the utmost variety and delicacy those devices to promote movement which are commonly termed mechanical ; while the functioning of the internal organs, the constant renewal and progressive development of the body, involve an extensive application of chemical laws already known to us by the study of inorganic matter.

In fine, man's body is a mechanism ; it obeys certain definite physical and chemical laws, by reference to which its structure and functions are, from a scientific point of view, wholly explicable. Neither here nor elsewhere, however, is the scientific view final. The mechanical conception, so far from excluding the teleological, implies teleology as the real ground of mechanism.² We are never justified in speaking of the body as a mere mechanism. As we have already seen, a mere mechanism exists nowhere in nature. Everything is what it is and acts as it does by virtue of the living potency of the Absolute present in it, and active through the instrumentality of mechanical laws. The flying projectile is obedient to this inner force, and the living body owes its vitality to the same principle. The Absolute works differently in different forms of being, but it is the one active Being from which all finite things receive, in varying degrees, a derivative and limited power of action.

If the objection be made that after all Lotze has only substituted a superior kind of vitalism for what is ordinarily meant by that term, it may be said in reply that his theory avoids the two great errors of vitalism as the term is commonly understood ; namely, that a wholly new principle must be assumed in order to explain the phenomena of life, and, secondly, that the action of this principle supersedes and transcends the physical laws which operate universally in the inorganic world.

¹ Cf. *Mikr.*, I : pp. 86-87.

² Cf. von Hartmann : *Lotze's Philosophie*, pp. 42.

Turning now to the consideration of man's mental life, we find that the conception of the soul has existed long, and is deeply rooted in the convictions of men. The languages of all civilized peoples have some word to denote this somewhat vague notion of a subject of our sensations and emotions, conditioned and limited by the body, yet in truth sovereign over it and surviving its dissolution. Belief in the existence of the soul has been supported, Lotze finds, by three lines of argument based upon an assumed freedom of self-determination, the incomparability of physical and psychical processes, and the unity of consciousness. Lotze is undoubtedly right in pronouncing the first two of these inconclusive¹; attention, therefore, will here be confined to the third.

The one conclusive argument for the existence of the soul is to be found in the fact of the unity of consciousness.² By this term it is not meant to assert that for each living form there exists but one soul, a conclusion, indeed, that would seem to be discredited by certain experiments upon low forms of life. Nor is it meant that we have a persistent consciousness of the unity of our being; self-observation does not confirm this proposition. It is not even meant to affirm that the soul must be a unity because it appears to itself as such. The force of the argument lies in the fact that in consciousness we have the unity of a being conscious of itself. That the manifold variety of mental experience, present and past, can be so brought together as to be presented as the experience of the self, a matter of self-observation, is the most positive and convincing proof of the unity of that being which accomplishes this. If the soul "even but rarely, but to a limited extent, nay even but once," were capable of this feat, the case would be proved. Not that we believe in the unity of the soul because it appears to itself a unity, but simply because it is able to appear to itself at all, because it is able to manifest itself in any way whatever. "The mere fact that, conceiving itself as a subject, it connects itself with any predicate, proves to us the unity of that which asserts this connection. Every judgment, whatever it may assert, testifies, by the mere fact that it is pro-

¹ For his discussion of these arguments see *Mikr.*, 1: pp. 161-169; *Met.*, §§238-240.

² Cf. Krestoff: *Lotze's metaphysischer Seelenbegriff*, pp. 14-26.

nounced at all, to the indivisible unity of the subject which utters it." ¹ This whole argument is very characteristic of Lotze, both by reason of the clear and forcible manner in which he leads to the conclusion, and by reason also of the facility with which this conclusion when reached finds its place in his system, and enters into happy relations with the doctrines he chiefly insists upon.

The result reached thus far may very well be expressed in the traditional form of a belief in a supersensuous soul, mysteriously connected with the body, but not of it, an indivisible and simple substance. But in seeking further to determine the nature of the soul, we must take into account the meaning which Lotze attaches to substance. Negatively, it is not any substratum of reality, either a physical or a spiritual entity. "My only definition of the idea of substance," says Lotze, "was this,—that it signifies everything which possesses the power of producing and experiencing effects, in so far as it possesses that power. Accordingly, this expression was simply a title given to a thing in virtue of its having performed something; it was not and could not be meant to signify the ground, the means, or the cause which would render that performance intelligible." ² Mental activities, then, and the unifying of these in consciousness, afford the best possible example of what Lotze means by substance.³ As we have seen, it is this experience of the unity of consciousness, he believes, which warrants us in regarding the 'thing' as in any sense a substantial unity, and compels us to attribute to it a spiritual existence. It is only an indivisible unity which can produce or experience effects.

Hence to the question, 'What then *is* the soul?' our answer must be to unfold the nature of its activities. The activity of anything is the truest possible expression of its nature. The living reality of the soul is to be sought in its concrete forms of actions, its ideas, emotions, and efforts, not in some noumenal 'substrate.' It need not trouble us that we can not tell what the soul is in itself, apart from its activities. All our definitions

¹ *Met.*, § 244; cf. *Mikr.*, I: pp. 170-176.

² *Met.*, § 243.

³ On Lotze's concept of substance, compare Krestoff: *Lotze's metaphysischer Seelenbegriff*, pp. 26-34.

are hypothetical ; they never state what a thing is, but how it acts under certain conditions. That which does not act and react has no existence, since the very essence of being is activity. Neither should we raise the question how the soul came to be. This knowledge, Lotze remarks, could be of moment to us only if it were to be applied to the creation of a world. Our task is simply to apprehend what is.

Preliminary to his discussion of the characteristic activities of the soul, Lotze asks whether there is a "single primitive mode of mental manifestation from which as from a common root the other faculties proceed." This question he answers in the negative, deciding in favor of the three primary and irreducible activities, cognition, feeling, and volition.¹ Two points here, or rather two aspects of what is essentially the same thing, are of importance. First, that these primitive powers are not to be regarded as a triumvirate of distinct and separable faculties, a tripartite division of the soul.² On the contrary, what we know as three is after all but one in the being of the soul. In every mode of its action the whole soul is present and energizes ; in ideation, for example, the whole soul expresses itself, but incompletely. So also in affection and in volition.³ The second point is that the soul belongs to the category of beings capable of excitation. Its activities are exercised, not spontaneously, but in reaction to stimulus.⁴ The stimuli may be external or internal, but the action of the soul is necessarily conditioned thus : the soul responds with its own native energy to a train of ideas as well as to an excitation through an organ of sense. It is a constant element in all the higher reactions. Not only in the simple forms of sensation, affection, and effort, but in all the highly complex and elaborated mental processes into which these enter as constituents, the soul is active after its own fashion. Nor is it in any way to disparage the soul or the character of its products to maintain that its activity must be called forth in response to stimulus. It is true of

¹ Cf. *Met.*, § 245 ; *Mikr.*, I : pp. 212—215.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, I : pp. 199—201.

³ *Mikr.*, I : pp. 202—203.

⁴ *Mikr.*, I : pp. 204—211.

the soul, as of every other element of reality, that its action depends to a greater extent upon its own nature than upon the nature of that which excites it to action.

Here it may be well to notice Lotze's solution of the long-vexed problem of the nature of the union of mind and body. Quite in harmony with his general metaphysical view, his conclusion is that this relation is one of interaction by means of a psycho-physical mechanism.¹ For Lotze the problem loses its crucial difficulty ; since his metaphysics admits no division of reality into the two realms of mind and matter, there is no question as to the possibility of interaction between two disparate forms of being. All reality being spiritual, we have only the primary difficulty of the conception of reciprocal action between any two elements of reality. The solution of this general problem we have already discussed. The difficulty in the notion of the union of mind and body as commonly conceived has been created, Lotze believes, by positing two beings so wholly disparate as to be incapable of reciprocal action and then attempting to unite them by means of a merely external bond. Our premises here need modification. No external bond could suffice to explain the union we do actually find. Their reciprocal action is itself what holds them together² ; the union of mind and body consists in the fact that they can and do interact. This interaction must have its ultimate ground in the essential nature of the elements themselves. It is a mistake to imagine that the interaction of mind and body presents a difficulty inherently greater than the interaction of so-called material elements.³ As we have seen, the reciprocal action of things is, in the final analysis, inexplicable. The relation of mind and body is but a special case under the general problem of the reciprocal relations of ultimate elements, and this general problem becomes intelligible only by means of the conception of the immanence of all finite things in the World-Ground.

¹ On the interaction of mind and body, see *Medicinische Psychologie* ; cf. also *Met.*, §§ 247-249 ; *Mikr.*, I : pp. 306-323 ; *Outl. of Psy.*, §§ 66-68. See also Krestoff : *Lotze's metaphysischer Seelenbegriff*, pp. 67-78 ; Kronenberg : *Moderne Philosophen*, pp. 29, 34-35.

² *Mikr.*, I : p. 306.

³ *Met.*, § 248.

But even on the assumption of an incomparability of physical and psychical elements, it would still be an unfounded prejudice to suppose that only like can act on like.¹ One of the common arguments against the interaction of body and mind is that the physical law of the conservation of energy is incompatible with this conception.² Lotze's discussion of this point is luminous.³ Of the practical truth of this comprehensive physical principle he has no doubt; he urges caution, however, and avoidance of hasty generalizations and deductions from this principle. We need first of all to dismiss the notion of a nameless primitive force of no determinate character, consisting merely in a constant amount. Such an abstraction can have no meaning and no reality. "What really gives to each phenomenon its character is the concrete nature of that which embodies the quantum of force, either wholly or partly, for the time being."⁴ Of greater importance, however, in the interpretation of this principle is Lotze's distinction between *equality* and *equivalence* of force. In so far as we can reduce two physical processes *A* and *C* to comparable primary occurrences consisting in comparable velocities of comparable masses, in so far it may be shown that *C*, which is produced by *A*, contains precisely the same amount of energy which *A*, by producing it, has lost. Where the two elements do not admit of this exact comparison, it is an essentially arbitrary course to conclude that the two processes in question involve the same amount of energy differently distributed. In this latter case, all we can say is that the two are *equivalent*, not that they are *equal*.⁵ Hence, to argue that the interaction of mind and body is impossible, since there can be no equating of energy in antecedent and consequent, is to ignore the fact that we are now dealing with elements in relation to which the term energy, as measured by mass and velocity, has no meaning whatever. We have no unit of measure common to physical and psychical processes. There is an equivalence of activities, certainly; we may say that a specific amount of one, measured by the unit *m*, corresponds to a specific amount of the other, measured by the unit *m'*. We can-

¹ *Met.*, § 248.

⁴ *Met.*, § 213.

² Cf. Külpe: *Outl. of Psy.*, p. 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*

³ Cf. *Met.*, §§ 211-215.

not equate the two. Experience would seem to show, therefore, that the physical law of the conservation of energy is but a special case under the more comprehensive principle of the equivalence of different effects.¹ Lotze has here drawn a very true distinction, and his whole discussion throws light on a problem too much involved in obscurity and confusion.

In the foregoing consideration of the proof of the soul's existence and the nature of its activity, we have already received a partial answer to the question as to how far man is a mechanism. In order to a more complete answer to this question, however, let us consider the characteristic mental activities, and seek to determine in what measure these are explicable by the mechanical principle.

In general, it may be said that the train of our ideas, the current of thoughts, feelings, and volitions, well-nigh infinitely varied and complex, which make up our inner life, has its course and connections mechanically determined.² "The concordant result of self-observation has long and generally been the conception of a mechanism by which the course of internal phenomena is directed, perhaps universally, certainly to a great extent, having other forms indeed, and governed by laws of its own differing from those of external nature, but exhibiting a like thorough-going dependence of each several event on its preceding conditions."³ This psychical mechanism reveals itself in many ways, in the phenomena of memory and recollection, and in the dependence of our feelings and volitions on certain impressions by which they are regularly evoked. In daily life we reckon on its unfailing efficiency. Yet so much greater are the difficulties of internal observation than the observation of external nature that we are unable to state with precision the laws of this mechanism.⁴ Certain of the modes of connection, however, are so marked that they are designated as laws, for example, the so-called Laws of Association and Reproduction.⁵

But when we have described the train of ideas, or the 'stream of consciousness,' and have seen that it reveals the workings of a psy-

¹ *Met.*, § 214.

⁴ *Ibid.*

² *Mikr.*, II, 3; *Met.*, III, Ch. 2.

⁵ Cf. *Mikr.*, I : pp. 241-246.

³ *Mikr.*, I : p. 218.

chical mechanism, we have by no means exhausted the mind's wealth or explained its most characteristic activities. All knowledge involves the comprehending and the judging of the facts presented, the active relating of ideas. These higher mental energies differ from the mind's reaction to external stimulus. They are reactions, to be sure, but of such a character as to imply a peculiar spontaneity and creative energy on the part of the mind. So, at least, Lotze maintains. To these relating activities of mind we now direct attention.¹

Lotze's modification of the doctrine of 'innate ideas'² makes clear his view as to what is the essential character of the mind's relating activity. The old notion of 'innate ideas' as original possessions of the mind, pure concepts of the understanding, pre-formed and ready for use, Lotze rejects as utterly untenable. On the other hand, the empiricism which postulates a passive receptivity of mind falls into an error equally great. The so-called 'innate ideas'—judgments of space, time, cause, and the rest—are merely the mind's habitual reactions. There is that in the original constitution of mind which constrains it at the suggestion of experience to develop these modes of conception. "No more than the spark as spark is already present in the flint before the steel calls it forth, do these concepts hover complete before consciousness previously to all impressions of experience . . ."³ But, on the other hand, it is quite as inconceivable that they should be conveyed in experience: they exist only for the mind and by virtue of the mind's action. The relating activity of mind is manifest chiefly in two ways, in the apprehension of the world by the understanding, and in the unifying comprehension of Reason.⁴ Let us consider each of these briefly.

Thinking goes beyond the mechanism of perception and memory. It tests and corrects the mechanical connection of ideas; it is, however, by no means independent of mechanism, but on the

¹ See *Mikr.*, II, 4.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, I: pp. 254-256; 2: pp. 294-295; *Kl. Schr.*, 3: pp. 523-528. *Logik*, § 324.

³ *Mikr.*, I: p. 255.

⁴ *Mikr.*, I: pp. 257-268.

contrary it is aided and directed in the exercise of its function by that very mechanical connection of ideas. The train of ideas alone is not *thinking*, and by itself can not discharge the offices of thinking.¹ In the three distinct forms of thinking activity, the concept, the judgment, and the syllogism, thought shows on the one side a dependence upon the mechanical connection of ideas, and on the other a spontaneous and creative energy by virtue of which its product is peculiarly its own. The concept, for example, depends upon a series of perceptions and images; but it is more than the combination of particular images, it is a coherent whole, a true universal, and as such is not adequately accounted for by perception and memory. The judgment still further transcends the mere mechanical order. It actively affirms a connection beyond that of the mere combination of ideas.² The syllogism likewise shows in a more elaborated form that which characterizes all the activities of the understanding, namely, the presence of a universal under which the particulars of experience are brought.³

Besides sense and understanding, Lotze finds in the human mind "a still higher cognitive energy—the activity of Reason, that, aiming at unity in our conception of things, seeks to complete experience."⁴ We have previously noticed the distinction between *Verstand* and *Vernunft*.⁵ It is the office of the former to combine and relate under the categories of space and time, of substance and attribute, of antecedent and consequent. It does not ask how the various parts are to unite to form a whole, nor does it speculate as to the nature and meaning of that whole. The principles of the understanding, Lotze says, exhibit to us the style of the world's construction, but not the form of the outlines of its completed whole.⁶ The completing and unifying of our knowledge is the true function of Reason, though it is far from fully accomplishing its task. In this supreme activity the mind comes finally into its own. The mechanism of the psychical life is seen to occupy its properly subordinate place of means to an end.

¹ *Mikr.*, I : p. 261.

² *Mikr.*, I : p. 263.

³ *Mikr.*, I : pp. 264–5.

⁴ *Mikr.*, I : p. 266.

⁵ See Ch. II.

⁶ *Mikr.*, I : p. 267.

In how far, it may now be asked, does the mechanical principle suffice for the explanation of man's mental life? We have, first of all, found the necessity of positing a soul—a self-conscious and unitary being which manifests itself in its various modes of activity—as the basis of mental life. Its activities are characteristic reactions which by reason of their uniformity and universality admit of being formulated by us as definite psychical laws. At least, some of them are thus formulated by us. These laws may be termed mechanical, in that consequent follows antecedent with invariable uniformity. The mechanical principle is adequate for the scientific explanation of psychical phenomena. The mechanical principle does not, however, give a full account of the being whose nature it is to act as it does. Here, as in the external world, we have an ultimate element of reality, the meaning of which we have not solved when we have determined merely the laws of its action. The reality is a concrete whole, the law is an abstract formula obtained by the analysis of its activity. Science discovers and formulates the laws which are the modes of procedure of things. There remain, after science has done its work, the further questions: What is the function of the thing as a whole, and what is its relation to other wholes? What is its significance in the system of reality? There is no conflict between mechanism and teleology. Each implies the other. Mechanism not only leaves room for teleology, but implies teleology as affording the final explanation which is beyond its own province. Teleology implies mechanism, or, at least, a system of means for the realization of its ends. The distinction here drawn is not without significance even in the realm of inanimate things. The engine is adequately explained for scientific purposes when the principles of its construction are understood, and the laws by which the latent energy of fuel becomes available for motive power. Its final explanation, however, is teleological, involving an account of its function in the social economy of the world.

A further question arises here. Do teleology and mechanism bear the same relation to each other in Lotze's conception of man as in his conception of the world? We have seen that he insists

upon the universal extent of mechanism throughout the realm of nature, organic and inorganic alike. No higher principle need be appealed to at any point in order to explain any physical process. Mechanism is absolutely universal in extent, but quite subordinate in significance. Its explanation is scientifically complete, but it is never ultimate. Does the mental life likewise testify to the universality of the mechanical principle, or are we forced to admit here the possibility of activities not in any sense mechanical?

On this point Lotze is by no means clear. Not infrequently we find him maintaining the universal prevalence of mechanism in the mental life.¹ The processes of thinking—the formation of the concept, the judgment, the syllogism—all involve a necessary dependence on mechanical law.² The ideal nature of mind is realized only through and by means of the psychical mechanism.³ Over against these affirmations, we find others of quite different import. Lotze seems quite unmistakably to say that as we pass beyond the simpler mental processes to those more complex processes which involve the relating activity of mind, the principle of mechanism is in some sense transcended, and gives place to a peculiarly spontaneous action not to be regarded as mechanical.⁴ There is still a partial dependence on the mechanical principle, to be sure, since these higher activities involve and comprehend the simpler ones. For example, the concept involves the memory-image, and hence the mechanism of association and reproduction. The essential feature in the concept, however, is the reference to a true universal, a coherent and indivisible whole which postulates an act of thought quite different from the mere holding together of a group of particulars.⁵ The thought-activity which produces the concept, Lotze seems to say, cannot, from any point of view, be termed mechanical. The same is true of all the higher activities involved in thought. As the mental life evolves from lower to higher forms, the presence of the uni-

¹ Cf. *Mikr.*, 1 : pp. 218–219 ; 2 : pp. 241–246 ; *Met.*, § 247.

² *Mikr.*, 1 : pp. 262–265.

³ *Mikr.*, 2 : pp. 275–276.

⁴ Cf. *Mikr.*, 1 : pp. 250–253, 256.

⁵ *Mikr.*, 1 : p. 262.

versal becomes increasingly evident in the processes of thought. Indeed, the distinguishing mark of thought is just this presence of the universal. "It is distinctive of the mind of man to be able, by reflecting on the cognitive acts it has mechanically executed, to discern in these the presence of laws that reach out indefinitely beyond the particular cases in which internal experience finds them fulfilled."¹ The mere mechanical course of our ideas, Lotze here maintains, can never account for this attainment of the universal.

There is obviously some confusion in Lotze's thought as to the degree to which mechanism prevails in the mental life. There is apparently, also, a discrepancy between the limitation imposed upon the mechanical principle here, and the universality claimed for it in the physical world. Lotze does not seem to be conscious of any inconsistency, or of any need of reconciling the two conceptions. In the physical world, as we have seen, a thorough-going mechanism is yet not incompatible with teleology. May not this position be quite as tenable in the explanation of the mental life? Mechanism and teleology are either incompatible everywhere or nowhere. I believe that Lotze is right in maintaining that the two principles are not at variance, but, on the contrary, are reciprocally implied in reality. If this be the true conception it must hold good for all reality, for the spiritual reality which we know as the soul, as well as for that which we term matter. In both cases, on Lotze's principles, we are dealing with elements that are spiritual in their nature. In no case is the so-called law something imposed from without which the element is bound to obey. Nor can it be regarded as even an inner necessity. It is, rather, the characteristic manner in which the element responds to excitation. It is the spontaneous exercise of a primitive and inherent energy. There is place here for freedom, within a certain range, at least, and for a tendency to develop improving reactions and hence to make progress towards a goal. The lower an element is in the scale of being, the less richly is it endowed by nature, doubtless, and the more simple and uniform are its reactions. What we term mechanical

¹ *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 300-301.

law merely designates such uniform actions as attract our notice by their constant recurrence. They are analyzed by thought out of the very warp and woof of rational experience. There would seem to be, however, no just ground for a distinction in kind between the simple, frequently recurring reactions which are manifest in 'things' and in the simpler mental operations, and those more complex and apparently more spontaneous reactions which we have designated as the relating activities of mind. The latter are more significant, doubtless, as indicating the nature and possibilities of man; strictly speaking, they are not more spontaneous, nor do they render any more imperative a teleological interpretation. Not that the lower activities are to be explained by the mechanical principle, and the higher by the teleological, but that lower and higher alike require both the teleological and mechanical principles for their complete explanation. Throughout the whole range of reality we must recognize 'the realism of the *form* of being, the idealism of its *content*.'¹

In close connection with the view of man's nature as teleological in significance but mechanical in the mode of its activities, is Lotze's conception of man as a personality. Indeed, the latter conception is in an important sense fundamental to and presupposed by the former. Not only is Lotze's philosophy anthropocentric, his chief contention is for the recognition of the whole nature of man.² Man is a being possessed not alone of understanding, but of feelings and will; his affections and aspirations, his ideals of worth, of duty, and of truth must be taken into account, for they form a part of the data of experience which no philosophy can overlook with impunity. It is just this ignoring of the living, concrete content of experience, which is 'richer than thought,' that constitutes the great defect of the Hegelian system, according to Lotze's thinking, and makes of the famous dialectic 'a ghostly ballet of bloodless categories.'

While Lotze spared no denunciations of what he regarded as

¹ Cf. Pfeleiderer: *Lotze's philosophische Weltanschauung*, pp. 63, 66; Vorbrodt: *Principien der Ethik und Religionsphilosophie Lotzes*, p. 37.

² Cf. Kronenberg: *Moderne Philosophen*, p. 24 seq.

an arrogant intellectualism, it is by no means just to assume that his attitude is accurately stated by classing him as one whose chief aim is to defend the rights of faith against the pretensions of knowledge, or to maintain the supremacy of the practical over the theoretical reason. Professor H. Jones says of Lotze that he regarded the antithesis between faith and knowledge as final, and tried to establish harmony by separating the antagonists, and dividing the realm of reality between them, making some things objects of belief, and others objects of knowledge.¹ The truth seems rather to be that Lotze recognized these two spheres, and recognizing also the fact that most men take part in both without being able to unite the two, sought earnestly to show their essential unity in a complete *Weltanschauung*.² The outcome of this attempt is his doctrine of the Good as the supreme principle which realizes itself in the world of finite reality by means of a system of eternal laws or truths. This attempt may or may not be deemed successful; the point to be noted here is that the fact that it was made at all argues against the view that Lotze held faith and knowledge to be fundamentally opposed and irreconcilable. At the end of a brief discussion of the familiar antithesis between faith and knowledge, Lotze remarks that "the only remnant of any useful result from this opposition of science to faith is, therefore, the conviction that the whole of our knowledge certainly does not originate from external experience, which is mediated for us by the senses; but that there are also inner states which are available as data for the acquisition of truth."³ Among these inner data are those of feeling, and Reason's judgments of worth as based upon such data are as valid as Reason's judgments of truth.

In connection with Lotze's general ethical conceptions we have already discussed at some length his doctrine of the feelings and their significance for mental life.⁴ It was there shown that the mind possesses by original endowment the power of reacting upon impressions with feelings of pleasure and pain, and that these feelings form the data of judgments of value, quite distinct from

¹ Jones : *Lotze's Doctrine of Thought*, pp. 24, 39.

² Cf. *Introd. to Mikr.*, X.

³ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 4; see also §§ 2-3.

⁴ Cf. Ch. II.

judgments of fact and of truth. It was further shown that self-consciousness grows out of this primitive self-feeling, and that all effort of will must be traced back to the same source. Self-consciousness is the *sine qua non* of personality, and hence personality is rooted in feeling. It is conceivable that a being might possess a superior intelligence, but lack all capacity for experiencing pleasure and pain ; such a being could never know itself as an ego, the subject of its own states as over against the non-ego.¹ The function of feeling as the basis of the apprehension of value has also been discussed somewhat at length in a foregoing chapter. It is unnecessary to repeat here the argument developed there. Emphasis was laid upon the fact that feeling forms the basis of Reason's determinations of worth in theoretical, æsthetic, and ethical ideals. Thus the regulative Ideas, the norms of judgment and conduct, are what they are and influence life as they do by virtue of the presence and potency in them of feeling. Reason, man's crowning faculty, which impels him to unify and complete his fragmentary knowledge, is not coldly cognitive but 'worth-appreciative.' It is rooted in the cognitive reaction and the feeling reaction, two primal activities of the soul.

It would be easy to show that feeling also manifests a dependence on mechanism ; for example, it is intimately connected with the subtle laws of association. It is evoked by stimulus, and in its simpler forms shows the mechanical uniformity noticeable in the simpler cognitive processes. As forming a constituent element in the more highly elaborated mental activities it shows the spontaneity which in general characterizes the higher phases of mental life. Feeling, no less than thought, tends to transcend the particular and attain to the universal. This it does in the Ideals of the worth-determining Reason.

Man's life, developing according to mechanical principles, leads out into the wide regions of ideal truth and conduct. Feeling and cognition alike begin with the particular, under the strict necessity of mechanical law, but lead to the universal, and show an increasingly evident subordination of mechanism to ideal ends. The conclusion of the fifth book of the *Mikro-*

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 37.

kosmos puts the matter as follows: "If we choose to sum up under the name of the Infinite that which stands opposed to particular finite manifestations, we may say that the capacity of becoming conscious of the Infinite is the distinguishing endowment of the human mind, and we believe that we can at the same time pronounce that this capacity has not been produced in us by the influence of experience, but that having its origin in the very nature of our being, it only needed favoring conditions of experience for its development."¹

In man, as in the cosmos, mechanism exists in order to the realization of ideal ends. Man's nature prompts him 'to make very large claims on existence.' Truth and Worth are to be realized in and by him. The mechanism of the body and of mental action is but the means by which he comes into this more abundant life.² The emphasis is thus chiefly on personality. It is only in the measure that the human spirit partakes of the personality of the Infinite that it is truly real, and only in this measure can Good and good things have any meaning for it.³

Every specific problem bearing upon the life and destiny of man is referred by Lotze to this fundamental conception of man's nature. The problem of freedom presents especial difficulties for him because of his insistence on the universal applicability of the principle of mechanism.⁴ He does little more with it than sift the arguments on both sides, and finally pronounce freedom of action an indispensable attribute of spiritual life. Without freedom "the world would be, not indeed unthinkable and self-contradictory, but unmeaning and incredible."⁵ That human spirits are "secondary centers of intelligent activity not entirely determined in their effects by the mechanical system of things,"⁶ Lotze holds to be an indubitable truth. Though immanent in the Infinite, they are yet in a certain sense 'outside' Him, by virtue

¹ *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 341-342.

² Cf. *Mikr.*, 2: pp. 275-276.

³ Cf. *Mikr.*, 3: p. 623.

⁴ On freedom in relation to mechanism and teleology, see Wahn: *Kritik der Lehre Lotze's von der menschlichen Wahlfreiheit*, pp. 38-50, 57.

⁵ *Met.*, § 65.

⁶ *Met.*, § 230.

of their very selfhood. Thus they become self-acting centers, able in a restricted measure to initiate new processes which do not proceed from the Absolute.¹ Lotze defends with vigor the doctrine of freedom in the sense of an unconditioned and absolutely free choice; he frankly admits that freedom in this sense is incomprehensible, and directs the force of his logic chiefly to showing that the objections to this view are less insuperable than determinists have been wont to assume.²

Quite as disappointing is Lotze's dismissal of the problem of evil as theoretically insolvable. His keenly analytic mind was well aware of the difficulties in both these riddles. He has shown extraordinary acumen in discovering the weaknesses of the arguments by which men have ordinarily sought to minimize the glaring fact of the prevalence of evil, and to apologize for their conviction that, notwithstanding this, the ground and goal of the world is good. No one has dealt more ruthlessly with such arguments, nor faced the actual facts more unflinchingly.³ To assume that evil is necessary—that God, though having in view only the good, is bound to laws that do not permit the good—is to limit the omnipotence of the Supreme Being, to subject the Unconditioned to conditions. Such a view, so far from being any gain to speculation, would call a halt to all speculation until metaphysics could be established on a new foundation.⁴ The view that regards evil as an education, and hence a means to good, not only leads back to the difficulty just named, but fails to grasp the problem in its magnitude. It leaves out of account the amount of evil for which there is no compensation. It passes over, for instance, the natural and inexorable torture and destruction of life in the animal world, and the engulfing of countless hopelessly stunted human lives in misery and sin.⁵ A third view is that which regards moral evil as prior to and the cause of physical evil, and moral evil itself as necessarily involved in

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 56.

² Cf. *Philos. of Relig.*, §§ 59-61; *Pract. Phil.*, §§ 17-23. See G. T. Ladd: "Lotze's Influence on Theology," *The New World*, No. 15.

³ See *Philos. of Relig.*, §§ 70-74.

⁴ Cf. *Philos. of Relig.*, § 71.

⁵ Cf. *Philos. of Relig.*, § 72.

freedom. This statement of the case has more to commend it, yet it is likewise at fault. It is inexplicable why physical evil should follow moral evil as a natural consequence, or why the innocent should suffer with the guilty. But, moreover, "the assumption that nature was originally without evil, and that sin first brought it into the world, not only lacks all empirical foundation, but is even in itself considered untenable,"¹ since it implies that moral evil is a principle that can work in nature and to which nature yields a pliant obedience.

At the point where criticism should give place to construction, Lotze, with characteristic caution, withdraws from the field. For the problem of evil he has no solution to offer, save that which is implied in his entire system of philosophy. He does not hesitate, indeed, to maintain that the problem is theoretically insolvable. The existence of sin and evil in nature and in history is 'a decisive and altogether insurmountable difficulty' in the way of establishing the indubitable supremacy of the good.² For the solution of the enigma would require a perfect knowledge of the ultimate plan of the world,³ and such a knowledge man can never hope to attain. It is because he deems it useless and worse than useless to attempt any theoretical solution of the difficulty that Lotze attacks the time-worn arguments. "There ought not to remain any seeming as if there were . . . any real speculative proof for the correctness of the religious feeling upon which rests our faith in a good and holy God and in the destination of the world to the attainment of a blessed end."⁴

Left thus, the discussion is far from satisfactory, and deserves, perhaps, the severity of von Hartmann's criticism.⁵ But it is not fair to Lotze to leave it thus badly stated. Detached from the body of his doctrine, this discussion does indeed leave the antithesis between faith and knowledge complete and final. Interpreted in the light of his entire philosophy, however, the antithesis in large measure disappears. The Reason, in the full scope of its functions as worth-appreciative, approves and confirms much that by the exer-

¹ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 73.

⁴ *Philos. of Relig.*, § 74.

² *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 610.

⁵ *Lotze's Philosophie*, pp. 22-23.

³ Cf. *Met.*, § 233.

cise of its purely speculative activity it is unable to demonstrate. Its judgments are not therefore irrational. They are based upon empirically given data no less than are rational judgments of a speculative character.¹ Ultimately all knowledge appeals for the guarantee and criterion of its validity to the worth-appreciative Reason.² The antithesis is not between reason and feeling, not even, in truth, between knowledge and faith; but, rather between the speculative and the worth-appreciative Reason, that is, between Reason in its narrower sense, limited to the judgment of fact and of truth, and Reason in its broader signification, extending its sovereignty over the whole realm of experience, judging not only of truth but of value. We find Lotze constantly reverting to and insisting upon this distinction. His great predecessors, Schelling and Hegel, he believes to have erred in large measure from an over-estimate of mere intelligence in comparison with the *whole* spiritual life. In his own view "all intelligence is only the *conditio sine qua non*, under which alone the final purposes that are really supreme—personal love and hate, the moral culture of character—and, in general, the whole content of life so far as it has value appears possible at all."³

The question of the final destiny of the human spirit is dealt with in much the same way as the problem of evil. It is customary to speak of Lotze's view as that of a conditional immortality. This term is somewhat misleading, however. He undoubtedly maintains that the sole ground for belief in the continued existence of the spirit is in the intrinsic worth of the human personality. In this sense, then, immortality is conditional: If the human spirit possesses such intrinsic worth that its destruction would impeach the meaning of the system of things, then its destruction is in the highest degree improbable. It is a question of values within the realm of Value. It can not be decided as a matter of fact, nor as a truth discerned by the intelligence. This view, however, contains no suggestion of a limitation of immortality to those of the human race who attain a

¹ Cf. Ch. II.

² *Met.*, § 94; *Logik.*, §§ 301, 303, 349; *Philos. of Relig.*, § 2; *Kl. Schr.*, 3: pp. 529, 540-541.

³ *Encycl. of Philos.*, § 18.

certain, though unknown, standard of excellence. So far as the writer is aware, no such idea was ever seriously considered by Lotze, and it is certainly opposed to the trend of his thought. So to limit immortality would be to make quantitative differences of paramount importance, as well as wholly to ignore differences of environment, and make the destiny of the individual hang upon the incidents of race, time, and birth.

As in his discussion of the problem of evil, here also we find Lotze maintaining that the truth of immortality can not be established by reasoning. In the *Metaphysik* he points out the weakness of the logical argument that the soul is an eternal and immutable element, and hence must continue to exist. This conception, he says, forces upon us the equally valid conclusion of the soul's pre-existence, and is incompatible with the monistic view.¹ Without pausing to establish this point, he puts aside the problem as one that does not belong to metaphysics: "We have no other principle for deciding it beyond this general idealistic conviction that every created thing will continue, if and so long as its continuance belongs to the meaning of the world; that everything will pass away which had its authorized place only in a transitory phase of the world's course. That this principle admits of no further application in human hands hardly needs to be mentioned. We certainly do not know the merits which may give to one existence a claim to eternity, nor the defects which deny it to others."² In the *Mikrokosmos* the course of the argument is much the same, and the same conclusions are reached.³

The problem of immortality, then, must take its place with those of freedom and of evil as presenting difficulties impossible of solution from a theoretical point of view. All these problems, however, demand of the Reason a belief in a solution which is beyond the reach of our knowledge. Such an ultimate solution would harmonize theoretical and practical demands, and show the validity of both. The import of Lotze's entire philosophy leaves no doubt as to his own conviction that the human personality

¹ *Met*, § 245.

² *Met.*, § 245; cf. *Encycl. of Philos.*, § 10; *Philos. of Relig.*, § 91.

³ *Mikr.*, I: pp. 437-440.

possesses a worth that is the guarantee of its continued existence. This comes out clearly in the *Mikrokosmos*, in the chapter on "The Meaning of History."¹ Lotze's contention throughout this chapter is in behalf of the individual. That view which regards history as the education of humanity he rejects on the ground that the individual is lost sight of and sacrificed in the advance of the race. Humanity does not consist in a concept, but in living, personal beings, and "the reason of the world would be turned to unreason if we did not reject the thought that the work of vanishing generations should go on forever, only benefiting those who come later, and being irreparably wasted for the workers themselves. . . . We are impelled to a demand for the lasting preservation of that, the continual destruction of which would render fruitless all effort to develop even the universal itself."² It is Lotze's conviction that those who "have passed away from the sphere of earthly reality have not passed away from reality altogether, and that in some mysterious way the progress of history affects them too."³ For "no education of mankind is conceivable unless its final results are to be participated in by those whom this earthly course left in various stages of backwardness."⁴ Such a faith, Lotze grants, is less easy now than it was when the world was smaller and life simpler; yet to this primitive faith he holds fast, as he who seeks a plan in history will find himself inevitably compelled to do.⁵

Lotze's doctrine of man rests upon the same ethical concepts to which we have traced his doctrine of the world and of God, namely, the concepts of personality and of teleology. Each of these is found to imply unity. As we have seen, these concepts depend upon and grow out of the ultimate category of the Good. This fundamental aspect of Lotze's philosophy has been too little emphasized in the past. His critics have for the most part concerned themselves with details of his system, and have overlooked the importance of his synthesis of the Good, Reality, and Truth into an organic whole. Yet the fundamental unity of these con-

¹ *Mikr.*, 2, Ch. VII.⁴ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 53.² *Mikr.*, 3 : pp. 50-51.⁵ *Ibid.*³ *Mikr.*, 3 : p. 51.

ceptions is at once the starting-point and the goal of his thought, and it is this alone which makes his philosophy in any true sense a system. Not that the world first is, and then is seen to be good; the Good is not something evolved out of or added to Reality, it is the ground of all Reality, the Supreme Principle which manifests and realizes itself in the world. It is the material postulate of all being. Reality is the concrete embodiment of the Good; the system of mechanical laws is but the mode of its activity. The concept of the Good plays much the same part in Lotze's philosophy as it does in that of Plato. It may be symbolized, though inadequately, by the sun as the center of the solar universe; it is the center of all being and of all active energy, it dominates the course of every finite thing and of the entire system of things. We have sought to show how all Lotze's characteristic metaphysical doctrines grow out of this conception. The Good, further defined as Personality, prescribes every tenet of his doctrine of the world, of man, and of God. Thus in his own system is embodied Lotze's conviction that the true beginning of metaphysics lies in ethics.



MAINE DE BIRAN.

From Lévy-Bruhl's *History of Modern Philosophy in France*.—Courtesy of the Open Court Publishing Company.

CORNELL STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

No. 5

MAINE DE BIRAN'S
PHILOSOPHY OF WILL

BY

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New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1904



PREFACE.

No special account of Maine de Biran's philosophy has before appeared in English, and the sources are rendered somewhat difficult by the author's highly involved style. It has seemed, therefore, that a somewhat extended exposition of his work may prove useful. In the composition of this monograph my object has been two-fold : to give a statement of Biran's system, and to show his exact position in the history of speculative thought. As a result of careful investigation, I have found it necessary to call attention to the unitary character of the system, which, as a matter of fact, centers around the single idea — will. This conclusion is, of course, opposed to the view of Naville, who in his introduction to the *Œuvres inédites* divides Biran's work into three sharply distinguished periods. I am convinced, however, that this division rests on insufficient grounds. For in the idea of activity is to be found the keynote of the entire philosophy. This idea is clearly evident in the writings assigned by Naville to the earlier and the later periods, as well as in the more important works that were written during the intervening years.

On the whole, it may seem surprising that I have not emphasized more strongly the importance of Biran's philosophy. It is perhaps unusual in a work of this kind to minimize the significance of the subject. However that may be, I have to confess that the motive which led me to begin my study, the expectation of finding elements of permanent value in Biran's philosophy based on frequent references to him as 'the French Kant,' has scarcely been realized by my subsequent investigation. Even with the most sympathetic interpretation, Biran cannot be placed among philosophers of the first rank. Kant's great significance does not consist merely in his emphasis on the activity of mind against the empiricists, but rather in the fact that he shows that the activity in which the nature of mind is expressed is universal and objective in character. Biran, however, remains at the point of

view of empiricism ; for his epistemology is developed from the subjective psychological fact of will, and continues relative to the end. The universal and necessary character of causality is left unexplained. His psychology aims at being introspective and factual, but is lost in a bewildering mass of abstractions. I have shown that he stands for a position which is neither a third view correlative with empiricism and rationalism nor a synthesis of these two recognized systems, but rather an extension of the former — a development of the Locke-Condillac school, yet a development that is still on the same epistemological plane.

Finally it should be noted that my conclusions in regard to Biran's relation to subsequent philosophical positions refer exclusively to the logical connection of his ideas, and not to his indirect influence, which was certainly very great, but which I have made no attempt to estimate. With this reservation, my results indicate that his effect on later thought, *e. g.*, on that of Cousin or of Renouvier, was not extensive.

In working out this subject I have received most valuable advice and suggestions from Professor J. E. Creighton, under whom I had been studying during the time devoted to the composition of the monograph, and from Professor Ernest Albee, who very kindly read my manuscript at an early stage.

N. E. T.

BAINBRIDGE, N. Y.

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SECTION I.

LIFE AND WORKS.

Maine de Biran was regarded by Cousin as "the first French metaphysician of our time."¹ Two reasons are sufficient to explain why this estimate was not made earlier or more generally accepted. Biran was not, like his great contemporary Kant, a teacher of philosophy. His career, as far as it was public, was almost entirely in the field of politics. To the men of his time he was better known as a statesman than as a philosopher. But the most important cause which contributed to his failure to gain early recognition was the fact that he published very little work. He was never quite satisfied with the form in which he had expressed his thought. The result was that his principal writings were left unfinished. Adequate material for estimating the value of his system was provided only by posthumous editions of his works.

The life of Biran was uneventful. He was born November 29, 1766, and died July 20, 1824. His father was a physician of the town of Bergerac, in the southwestern part of France. He was educated in the neighboring town of Perigueux, where he studied Condillac's philosophy under the direction of the *doctrinaires*. In 1785 he became a life-guardsman, but early in October of that year was wounded in the arm. He then went to Grateloup and remained there during the Reign of Terror. Subsequently he held several administrative offices in the province of Dordogne. But in 1809 he was chosen a member of the legislative assembly; and after 1812 he established his residence permanently at Paris. He was a member of the commission which took advantage of the reverse that Napoleon had sustained in Russia to demand guarantees of the peace of Europe and the liberties of the French citizens. After the Restoration, Biran was a member of the Chamber of Deputies until his death,

¹ Maine de Biran, *Œuvres Philosophiques*, Vol. I, p. xi.

except in the single session 1817. He voted at first with the liberals, but afterwards with their opponents. The change was due not to inconsistency, but to a desire to support the royal power which was in his opinion the only safeguard against anarchy or despotism.

Biran's first philosophical work was the *Influence de l'habitude*, which, in 1802, won for him the prize offered by the Institute of France. Three years later he received another prize from the same source, for his *Décomposition de la pensée*. In 1807 he received special mention by the Berlin Academy for his *Mémoire sur l'aperception interne immédiate*. Finally, in 1811, he received the prize from the academy of Copenhagen for his *Mémoire sur les rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme*. The first essay, together with an anonymous *Examen des leçons de philosophie de Laromiguière* in 1817, and *Une exposition de la doctrine de Leibnitz* in 1819,¹ were the principal works which he gave to the public during his life. But to appreciate the system as a whole, the *Essai sur les fondements de la psychologie* and the *Nouveaux essais d'anthropologie*, which were first edited by E. Naville in 1859, are indispensable. The first may be called Biran's masterpiece. This work, which was begun in 1811, was incomplete when Biran went to Paris and was developed at his leisure during several succeeding years. In the Introduction, the author says he intended to unite the three prize essays into a work more systematic and more carefully elaborated than the writings which he had presented to the various societies. He was led to adopt this plan from the fact that the three essays were the same in idea, differing only in the degree of development and in the form in which the idea was expressed.² The *Nouveaux essais d'anthropologie* (1823-24) is a fragment; but is very important, since it embodies the final expression of the author's philosophy of religion. This work reproduces many of the ideas in the *Psychologie*, and thus clearly shows the internal connection in all Biran's philosophy.

¹ In the *Biographie Universelle*, Vol. 23.

² Cf. *Œuvres inédites*, publiées par Naville, Vol. I, pp. 34-35.

SECTION II.

OBJECTIONS TO NAVILLE'S VIEW OF BIRAN'S DEVELOPMENT.

At the outset it should be said that under the title, "Philosophy of Will," I do not limit myself either to the period or to the characteristics of Maine de Biran's work, which that name might suggest to one who was familiar with Naville's exposition. In the *Nouveaux essais* there is a classification of the observed facts of human nature, which Naville takes as a key to three successive stages in the thought of the philosopher. Biran finds an animal life that is characterized by impressions, appetites, and movements, of physiological origin, and subject to the law of necessity ; a human life resulting from the appearance of free will and self-consciousness ; and a life of the spirit which begins when the soul frees itself from the rule of the lower tendencies and turns to God, there to find repose. On the analogy of this classification, which is taken to indicate Biran's development, Naville has described the system under three divisions : — a stage (1794–1804) in which Biran is influenced by the work of Condillac and agrees with Cabanis and de Tracy in regarding sense impressions as the origin of thought ; a philosophy of will (1804–1818) when Biran develops with all its consequences the fact of the activity of mind ; and finally (1818–1824) a philosophy of religion.¹ Favre agrees with Naville on this point. "Maine de Biran passed from the sensationalism of Condillac to a doctrine based on the self, and finally reached a third phase in which he gave the self a support : God."² Although Naville does not regard these divisions as absolute, since he recognizes that the first period contained in germ the principles which became explicit in the second period, and that early in the development of the philosophy of will there were tendencies apparent which indicated the mystical character of Biran's later thought ; yet so much importance is attached to the distinctions that they determine the form of the exposition.

¹ *Op. cit.*, I, pp. v–viii.

² *Essai sur la métaphysique et la morale de Maine de Biran*, p. 6.

While admitting the practical convenience of this division, I think that it conveys an erroneous impression of the relations of the several parts of Biran's work. In the principal essay of the first period (1794-1804), the *Influence de l'habitude*, we already find the idea really fundamental to Biran's philosophy. The significance of the consciousness of effort and of will is here clearly stated. Only by a voluntary movement which meets a resistance, that is, by an effort which is a relation between a subject and a limit, do we gain a basis for consciousness of self and knowledge of the external world. A single passage will show how far Biran was removed from the philosophy of Condillac which Naville makes the dominant element in the first period.

"Effort necessarily carries with it the perception of a relation between the being which moves, or which wills to move, and some object which is opposed to the movement. Without a subject or a will that determines the movement, and without a term which resists, there is no effort. And without effort there is no knowledge or perception of any kind."¹

In view of this and similar passages, we may regard the first period not so much as a distinct stage in the thought of the philosopher as an incomplete expression of the one idea of conscious activity which came to clear light in the second period. The doctrines which Naville takes as characteristic of the first stage were not the results of Biran's own thought, but rather the inheritance which he received from the school of Condillac. They were the subject matter, not the product, of his early philosophical activity.

Merten notes the fact that the notion of effort appears in the first pages of the essay on habit; but he says: "It is easy to see that it is only a question here of effort conceived as the correlative term of the impression."² But if "impression" is taken to mean an effect produced on the organism by something entirely external and foreign to the organism, we find that effort is not always correlated with impression even in the essay on habit. For example, Biran says: "We cannot doubt that the educa-

¹ *Œuvres philosophiques*, Vol. I, p. 27.

² *Étude critique sur Maine de Biran*, p. 9.

tion of what are usually considered merely as the sense organs begins only by the development of their individual or associated activity."¹ It will be noticed that Biran says 'education,' not 'existence': the organism is here regarded as susceptible to impression prior to any experience of effort. If, on the other hand, by impression is meant the consciousness that the will meets a resistance, effort is correlated with impression not only in Biran's earlier, but also in his later, work. Similarly, the distinction of the third from the second period is due to a change in the sphere of application, rather than in the essential character of the principle. In the philosophy of will the principle is applied to the individual. In the philosophy of religion as far as it is a self-consistent system, the principle of conscious activity is considered also in extra-individual relations. At the beginning, Biran was exclusively interested in a psychological account of mind, and only at a later date did he take up the questions concerning man's wider relations to society and the world.² Even at this later period these more fundamental problems never received adequate treatment. But this point will be worked out in more detail after we have given a general statement of his system.

Accordingly, in the treatment of Biran's philosophy of will, we shall not limit the consideration to the period indicated by Naville's division (1804-1818), but shall devote some attention to the earlier writings and also to the later development of the philosophy. It will, of course, remain true, however, that our study will have an especial reference to the second period, since it is here that Biran's ideas are most clearly stated, and that his views have most significance for the history of philosophy. This is the period of his most systematic and extended work, the *Essai sur les fondements de la psychologie*.

¹ *Œuvres philosophiques*, I, p. 99.

² Gabriel Tarde has recently pointed to this individualistic feature. Maine de Biran found that the "experiences of touch, sight, and hearing, in which it (the child) felt itself at once subject and object, stood out in high relief from the ordinary impressions of touch acting upon foreign substances, and from the usual impressions of sight and hearing. . . . But what Maine de Biran did not see is this: That stranger still and standing out yet more sharply on the background of our external perceptions, is our perceptions of other people." Interpsychology. *International Quarterly*, Vol. VII, No. 1, p. 62.

SECTION III.

BIRAN'S RELATION TO EARLIER THINKERS: LOCKE, CONDILLAC, KANT, AND REID.

Before considering Maine de Biran's philosophy in detail, it is well briefly to review the work of his direct predecessors in reference to the special points in which their opinions are related to the principle which he makes ultimate. This reference will show the nature of the philosophical thought which was dominant in France in his time, and also the specific manner in which he reacted against the current sensationalism; it will enable us to estimate his position at the beginning of his career, and also to determine the extent of his development. Comparison with the historical environment will lend distinctness to his leading ideas and will make it possible to determine more exactly the significance of their application in his system. With this end in view we shall attempt to trace the idea of the activity of the self as it is found in the work of Locke and of Condillac. But in this connection the treatment can be no more than a mere outline; and naturally cannot include even the mention of many important elements in the views of these philosophers.

At this point we may notice a definition of sensationalism.¹ Cousin, who found it congenial and advantageous² to call himself a disciple of Biran, brought the name into use. With him the term designated the least developed of the four common philosophical positions. The three types of thought correlative with it were idealism, skepticism, and mysticism.³ He employed it to characterize the school of Condillac. But in a wider sense it has been applied to various thinkers, sometimes to denote a materialistic metaphysics, at other times an empirical epistemology, or finally a hedonistic ethics. Especially in the second of these senses the term was applied to the views of Condillac and in a

¹ Cf. Beaulavon's definition in *La grande encyclopédie*.

² Picavet, article *Biran* in *ibid.*

³ Cf. Cousin's *History of Modern Philosophy* (translated by O. W. Wight), Vol. II, Lecture IV.

lesser degree to those of Locke. The epistemological aspect of these systems is important in relation to Biran.

Locke could accept without hesitation the empirical dictum, *Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu*. But a careful consideration of his account of experience reveals the presence of self-activity in his theory of knowledge. All the materials of knowledge and reason come from experience. This experience, however, includes the observation not only of "external sensible objects" but of the "internal operations of our minds."¹ This "perception of the operations of our own mind within us," the second "fountain from which experience furnisheth the understanding with ideas," is named specifically Reflection, and "though it is not sense as having nothing to do with external objects, yet it is very like it (sense) and might properly enough be called *internal sense*."² It is evident that, for Locke, the material derived from reflection has at least equal value with the products of sensation. The mind "observes its own actions . . . and takes from thence other ideas which are as capable to be the objects of its contemplation as any of those it received from foreign things." From reflection we derive the idea of perception and of will. "The power of thinking is called the understanding, and the power of volition is called the will."³ Besides these simple ideas and their various modes there are other ideas that may be derived from reflection, *e. g.*, power. We observe "in ourselves that we can at pleasure move several parts of our bodies that were at rest."⁴ Power is classified as active and passive. While ideas of both active and passive power are derived from our experience of the external world, "our senses do not afford us so clear and distinct an idea of active power, as we have from reflection on the operations of our minds."⁵

In comparing Locke with Biran, it is very important to notice his conception of will. In the chapter on power, he makes will and understanding examples of power. In regard to the first he

¹ *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, II, Ch. 1, § 2.

² *Ibid.*, II, Ch. 1, § 4.

³ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. VI.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. VII, § 8.

⁵ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. XXI, § 4.

says : " We find in ourselves a power to begin or to forbear, continue or end several actions of our minds and motions of our bodies, barely by a thought or preference of the mind ordering, or, as it were, commanding the doing or not doing such or such a particular action. This power which the mind has thus to order the consideration of any idea, or . . . the motion of any part of the body . . . in any particular instance is what we call will." ¹ These powers of mind, which are sometimes called faculties, should not be supposed "to stand for some real beings in the soul that performed those actions." ² The nature of the will is also evident from the treatment of the question of freedom. The agent is at liberty to follow the preference of his mind ; but to ask if the will has freedom is to ask if one power has another power." ³ Volition "is an act of the mind directing its thought to the production of any action, and thereby exerting its power to produce it," ⁴ while "freedom consists in the dependence of the existence . . . of any action upon our volition of it." ⁵

The secondary place which the will holds in Locke's scheme is further shown by a consideration of his view of spirit. Finite spirit is one of the three varieties of substance, yet in the mental operations of thinking, reasoning, fearing, *etc.*, which we refer to a spiritual substrate "we have as clear a notion of the substance of spirit as we have of body." ⁶ In the section on the intuitive knowledge of our own existence, Locke is so far from making will the core of being that he does not even mention it as one of the forms of consciousness in which we find direct and indisputable evidence of existence, although he would no doubt be willing to include it as coördinate with the "I think, I reason, I feel pleasure and pain" and "I doubt." ⁷ Finally, it is not the will that makes the self as in Biran. "Nothing but consciousness can unite remote existences into the same person : the identity of sub-

¹ *Op. cit.*, II, Ch. XXI, § 5.

² *Ibid.*, II, Ch. XXI, § 6.

³ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. XXI, § 16.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. XXI, § 28.

⁵ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. XXI, § 27.

⁶ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. XXIII, § 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, IV, Ch. IX, § 3.

stance will not do it; for whatever substance there is, however framed, without consciousness there is no person."¹

In the system of Condillac, there is presented a form of empiricism which differs in many respects from that of Locke and which is especially important in the present connection. The *Traité des sensations* appeared in 1754. It is the aim of the author to show that all knowledge is derived from sensation. By means of sensations the soul is modified and all its knowledge and faculties are developed. The problem here is not so much the nature of the mind as the character and origin of mental operations. With reference to the philosophy of Locke, Condillac makes the following criticism: "The greater part of the judgments which are united to all sensation escaped him [Locke]. He did not realize that we must learn to touch, to see, and to hear, *etc.* All the faculties of the soul appeared to him as innate qualities."² Reflection is not a source of ideas coördinate with sensation. Locke did not carry his analysis far enough. "The sensations after having been attention, comparison, judgment, finally become reflection."³ It is not our purpose to trace the system of transformed sensations as they are variously related to the original sensation, which Condillac builds up in describing the developing consciousness of his statue. But with reference to Biran it is necessary to consider, at least very briefly, the place of desire and will in the view of the author of the *Traité des sensations*.

The sensations from the first have an affective quality. While the statue is for itself nothing more than the single sensation to which it attends, that sensation is agreeable or disagreeable. Experience is pleasant or unpleasant even before there is any comparison of experiences. Pain cannot make the statue desire a state that it does not know. The first sensation, however agreeable or disagreeable it is, cannot lead to desire.⁴ Only when the statue notices that it can cease to be what it is and become what it has been, will desire arise from a painful state.⁵ Desire is the

¹ *Op. cit.*, II, Ch. XXVII, § 23.

² *Traité des sensations. Extrait raisonné*, pp. 6 and 7 (Houel ed.).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴ *Cf. ibid.*, I, Ch. II, § 3.

⁵ *Cf. ibid.*, I, Ch. II, § 4.

activity of the faculties of the soul when they are directed upon a thing of which we feel the need. It presupposes the idea of something better than what is at present existent, and also a judgment of the difference of two successive states.¹

With Biran will is absolutely distinct from desire, with Condillac it is a further development of desire. The memory of having satisfied some desires gives the hope of being able to satisfy others. Although the outcome is not certain, confidence increases in proportion as the need is felt to be great. The statue then does not limit itself to desiring; but it wills. Will is "an absolute desire, that is, a desire of such a nature that we think the thing desired is in our power."²

Personality is not constituted by the activity of the will as in Biran, but is dependent upon memory. With the first sensation there is no personality; but with a change of sensation the self "judges that it is the same which has existed before, in another manner, and it says 'I.'"³ This consciousness of self is so far from being dependent on will that it is even antecedent to desire. "Before being able to say 'I desire' one must be able to say 'I.'"⁴ The sense of touch is a unique form of sensation. It is the first in importance in the animal life. Condillac names touch the fundamental feeling. He even identifies it with personality. This feeling and the *ego* of the statue are "only one thing in origin."⁵ It is by this sense that the statue discovers its body and learns that there is an external world. This result is effected by movement; but contrary to Biran's theory, the movement by which we discover the *non-ego* is involuntary. It is determined by the pleasant or unpleasant character of sensation; but the organism reacts without any plan. Prevision is unnecessary, obedience to nature alone is sufficient. In consequence of the organization of the statue, its muscles move its limbs on the occurrence of an unpleasant stimulus "and it moves without a plan as even without knowing that it moves."⁶

¹ Cf. *Op. cit.*, I, Ch. III, §§ 1 and 2.

² *Ibid.*, I, Ch. III, §9.

³ *Ibid.*, I, Ch. VI, §2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. I, §3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. IV, §2.

With the discovery of something beyond the self, which is brought about through the sense of touch, the statue finds that the essential character of each sensation is that it leads to some knowledge. This reference beyond itself transforms the sensation into an idea. "Every impression which conveys knowledge is an idea."¹ Knowledge is thus independent of volition. It is the final result of the transformation of the sensation. In the beginning the sensation had an affective attribute, but not volitional character; and this last step in the development which changes sensation to idea is effected by the influence of an external stimulus upon a purely passive organism.

Although we cannot doubt the existence of body to which we must refer sensible qualities, yet we are quite cut off from the hope of any real knowledge of the object. For "considering the origin of ideas, it is clear that they present to our statue nothing but qualities variously combined. The statue perceives, for example, solidity, extension, divisibility, figure, and motion united in all that it touches; and it has consequently the idea of body. But to the question, What is a body? it can only answer, it is there, that is to say, you will always find there, solidity, extension, divisibility, and figure."² The words being and substance are devoid of positive significance. Our knowledge is sufficient for our needs. An intuitive knowledge of the reality of the self, which Locke finds by reflecting on the operations of the mind, and which Biran finds in the consciousness of effort, is unnecessary in the system of Condillac.

The important characteristic of the system, for us, is the fact that in this account of origins, Condillac does not make the will fundamental. The will together with memory, comparison, reflection, *etc.*, is derived from an original, affectively qualified sensation. Knowledge of the not-self does not depend upon will, but the reverse is rather true, since will is a form of desire, and desire implies knowledge of the not-self. This difference in the treatment of will is the essential distinction between Condillac and Biran. We shall see later that there is a striking similarity

¹ *Op. cit.*, II, Ch. VIII, §28.

² *Ibid.*, IV, Ch. VI, §9.

between their forms of exposition and also in their explanations of important points.

From Condillac we proceed to consider briefly the form of contemporary empiricism, with which our philosopher was most closely connected. Maine de Biran's first important work was a study of the influence of habit on the various modes of conscious activity. Destutt de Tracy was chairman of the committee which awarded the prize to this essay. He was also the leading representative of the idealogists. In 1796 he had invented this name to mark out what he and his friends believed to be the proper line of philosophical activity. Metaphysics was discredited, in their opinion, because it applied to researches on the nature of being and in regard to the origin and first cause of things, which they held to be useless. Psychology meant the science of the soul and also referred to first causes. Ideology, on the contrary, treated questions of origin as unanswerable. Whether we study within or without ourselves all we can hope to accomplish is to acquire a deeper knowledge of the laws of nature. Ideology adopted purely scientific methods of research. It aimed to be the basis of grammar, logic, ethics, pedagogy, and social science. By exclusive attention to the empirical study of mind, de Tracy hoped to develop a system which should be more firmly established and more fruitful in results than the pre-revolutionary philosophy had been. Next to Destutt de Tracy the most important of the idealogists was an intimate friend of Biran, named Cabanis, who was especially distinguished for his physiological researches.

In the essay on habit, Maine de Biran begins with this essentially epistemological view. How closely he is allied to the idealogists in method and purpose, can be seen from his own statement of his position in the introduction. "In all that is to follow, I have no other intention than to investigate and analyze effects as we can know them, either by reflecting on what we experience in the exercise of our senses and different faculties, or by studying the conditions or the play of the organs on which this exercise depends. I have tried to unite, in certain respects at least, ideology and physiology."¹ Again he says: "We know

¹ *Œuvres philosophiques*, Vol. I, p. 16.

nothing of the nature of forces. They are manifest to us only by their effects. The human mind observes these effects, traces their analogies, and calculates their relations when they are susceptible of measure ; this is the limit of its power."¹

In order to determine the influence of habit, Maine de Biran finds it necessary to state his general view of the faculties and operations of the understanding. This is fortunate, as it gives data by which we can make out the relation of his early position to that of Locke and of Condillac. With the earlier philosophers Biran believes that the intellectual faculties derive everything from sensation, or by receiving impressions.² "The faculty of receiving impressions is the first and most general of all that occur in the living organism."³ The impression is the result of the action of an object on an animate being. The object, whether internal or external, is the cause of the impression. Impression has the same value as sensation in the ordinary acceptance of that term. The impression varies for consciousness according to which of the particular sense organs mediates the modification. And in this respect the organism is a constituent factor in all sensations.

There are, however, certain further operations of thought which cannot be explained by a comparison of the products of the various sense organs. This fact leads Biran to postulate a further principle of classification, according to which impressions are either active or passive. When we perceive a modification of any particular kind in consciousness and have no power over the modification, the impression is passive. Even in this case the experience is not a mechanical result of the stimulus. The sense organ by its specific activity determines the character of the sensation. The activity occurs within the self, but without the direction of the self. In the case of voluntary movement, we have a totally different kind of experience. In moving the arm, for example, after we abstract from every impression of the sort above described which results from the movement, we have left an impression of an entirely different nature. Here the self cre-

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 17.

² *Cf. ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 15 and 16.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 18.

ates its own modification. It can begin, leave off, or vary the modification. And consciousness apart from the passive impressions gives an evidence of the modifications.

The nature of the organism is such that there is an intimate connection between the faculty of mere sensation and the faculty of movement. They are constituent factors in almost all experience. With few exceptions the impressions have a mixed character; they are made up of sensitive and motor activity, and are active in one relation and passive in another. The ratio of the movement and the feeling varies. When the feeling is very prominent the individual is not conscious of the accompanying movement and the impression is passive. To this form Biran applies the name sensation. If the motor element is prominent, or even if it stands in such a degree of equilibrium that it cannot be eclipsed, the individual is active and can compare himself with others. To impressions which have these characteristics Biran gives the name perceptions. In each of the sense organs there is a particular relation of the two factors. Classified in a graded order according to the decreasing prominence of the motor factor, we have the sense of touch, vision, auditory sensation correlated with the vocal faculty, the sense of taste, and the sense of smell, and finally the impressions received from the internal parts of the body which can be called pure sensations.¹

To summarise the positions of Locke, Condillac, and Biran, we may say that each makes knowledge dependent upon experience. But Locke begins with a mind which derives its experience from the two-fold source, sensation and reflection. And under reflection are found perception and will as modes of activity. Moreover, consciousness is a *conditio sine qua non* of perception and will. Condillac builds up perception, will, and consciousness in general from the action of a stimulus on a purely passive mind. Will is dependent upon desire, and desire in turn is dependent upon the affective attribute of sensation. Perception of the *non-ego* is gained through a unique quality or the sense of touch. Biran discovers in the original impressions or materials of experience an active and a passive factor. It is the active, that is, the volitional element

¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 21-25.

which distinguishes perception from mere sensation and which is thus the basis of consciousness.

The development of this idea of an active empirical factor is the characteristic phase of his system. He identifies the self with the feeling of effort. It is by making this perceived self a fact rather than an idea that he distinguishes his system from all forms of rationalism, which he regards as based on abstract ideas. By emphasis on the "inner" and consequently necessary character of this fact he differentiates his position from that of empiricism. The categories of thought are derived from the nature of the primitive fact, and his psychology is an account of the relation in which the self discovered in effort stands to the physiological system with which it is connected.

In this connection we may note the relation in which Biran stood to Kant. The direct debt of the French to the German philosopher was very slight.¹ The inaugural dissertation of 1770 was the only one of Kant's works which Biran studied in the original.² Biran's own estimate of the relation is valuable, especially since he did not, as was the case in reference to the system of Condillac, over-emphasize the disparity between his own position and that which he criticizes. He says: "Kant occupies himself with the classification or with the logical order of the means (*instruments*) of knowledge, rather than with the real analysis of the elements of that knowledge itself." The unitary subject and the multiple object "are, in his view, absolutely undivided and indivisible in inner and outer experience; for the object can be conceived only under the forms of space and time which are inherent in the subject . . . , and the subject . . . cannot be known, originally, by itself, without the representation of some object." Again, he says: "The subject and object are," for Kant, "only two abstractions, no real or positive knowledge belongs to either the one or the other," yet "all reality consists only in the union of these two abstracts elements."³ The critical philosophy by

¹ The principal sources of Biran's knowledge of Kant were, probably, Gerando's *Histoire comparée des systèmes* (1804) first edition, and the second volume of Ancillon's *Mélanges*. Cf. *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. I, p. 166.

² Kühltmann, *Maine de Biran*, p. 58.

³ *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. I, pp. 167-8.

investing every sensation with space and time which are the inherent forms of sensibility, "makes no distinction between the different kinds of sensations, inner and outer, or the two sorts of elements in a single complete sensation,"¹ the representative and the unrepresentative elements which occur now singly and now together. It is clear that for Biran the subject-object relation is psychological while for Kant it is epistemological.

We may easily work out objections to Biran's philosophy from the Kantian point of view. The self as a fact of immediate perception admittedly contains an empirical factor. Therefore any deductive account of the principle of knowledge based upon this self must be devoid of the character of absolute necessity. "If our knowledge of thinking beings in general, so far as it is derived from pure reason, were founded on more than the *cogito*, and if we made use at the same time of observations on the play of our thoughts and the natural laws of the thinking self, derived from them, we should have before us an empirical psychology, which would form a kind of physiology of the internal sense, and perhaps explain its manifestations, but would never help us to understand such properties as do not fall under any possible experience (as, for instance, simplicity), or to teach apodictically anything touching the nature of thinking beings in general."² If, however, we pass over this objection and provisionally admit the validity of deductions from the psychological self, we find the same difficulty in Biran's system which Kant finds in rational psychology in general, that is, "reason imposes upon us an apparent knowledge only, by representing the constant logical subject of thought as the knowledge of the real subject in which that knowledge inheres. Of that subject, however, we have not and cannot have the slightest knowledge, because consciousness is that which alone changes representation into thoughts. and in which, therefore, as the transcendental subject, all our perceptions must be found. Besides this logical meaning of the I, we have no knowledge of the subject in itself, which forms the substratum and foundation of it and of all our thoughts."³

¹ *Œuvres philosophiques*, Vol. III, p. 240.

² *Critique of Pure Reason* (trans. by Max Müller), p. 283.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 285-286.

Biran has been compared to Kant with reference to the concept of self-activity. Let us see now just how much and how little real resemblance there is.

König called Biran the French Kant. But the comparison is employed with reference to the emphasis that each of the philosophers gives to the "spontaneity of the subject." Moreover König points out the different applications of the concept in the two cases. "The same idea of spontaneity by means of which Kant reformed empirical epistemology is applied by Biran to the psychology of sensationalism. That which was an epistemological hypothesis in the first instance appears as a psychological fact in the second. The counterpart of the transcendental function of the understanding meets us as the empirical activity of the psychological subject."¹ König regards Biran's psychological deduction of the categories as entirely unsatisfactory. "Although Biran's attempt to deduce the pure concepts of the understanding from inner perception is to be regarded as unsuccessful and his identification of the logical subject with the subject as object of inner perception is an error which manifests itself by its consequences, yet his work is of great interest, *etc.*"² Again, epistemology "has emancipated itself more and more from psychology."³ Lévy-Bruhl finds great resemblance between Biran and Kant apparently because neither the one nor the other believed that "by means of analysis based on purely internal experience, we can . . . arrive at the notion of a substantial ego."⁴ But we find that in Kant soul-substance is opposed to a transcendental unity while in Biran it is opposed to a real force.

With Kant the principle of activity is involved throughout the whole of consciousness. With Biran it is a particular element in consciousness. Will is a part of mind over against other parts, passive elements, as pure sensations, desires, pleasure, pain, *etc.* Consciousness is a sum of mental elements, which respectively derive their significance and value from the relation in which they stand to the active element, will, rather than a

¹ *Philosophische Monatshefte*, Vol. XXV, pp. 160 ff.

² *Ibid.*, p. 169.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 190-191.

⁴ *History of Modern Philosophy in France* (Eng. trans.), p. 327.

unity which is organically related to its parts. The result is that, for Biran, the self is one element, or part, abstracted from consciousness, rather than the total subjective side of a unitary experience. Consequently, the self is a special fact to be verified by introspection in the same manner as any other part within consciousness. It differs from the other simple elements by reason of its active character, and its universal occurrence throughout the conscious life ; but not by including the other elements within itself. The difference between Kant and Biran will become very clear as we trace the relation of the self taken as a particular element to the ideas of substance, identity, and causality. And it will also receive illustration when later in the psychology we trace it as one constituent factor in the mental life.

Naville places Biran, as an opponent of skepticism, with Kant and Reid. "The formal denial of the principle of causality in the writings of the skeptical Scotsman (Hume) gave him (Biran) the full consciousness of the value of his own thought. When we consider the importance which he attached to the principle, and the attention he gave to the arguments of the skeptic even in their minutest detail, we feel authorized to say that he is on the same ground with Kant and Reid. . . . He accomplished the same work of struggle and restoration as Kant and Reid, but he accomplished it in other ways."¹ Naville compares Biran's psychology with the "phenomenalism" of the Scottish school, as represented by Dugald Stewart.

For the present consideration, however, it is more important to compare Biran's principles with those of Reid, as the real head of the Scottish school. Seth has shown very clearly Reid's method of attacking the "Idealistic school" (Descartes, Locke, and Hume). Reid struck directly at the root-assumption, "namely that experience yields as its ultimate data such self-subsistent, 'loose,' or relationless units of sensation as Hume begins and ends with."² "We do not start, he insists, with ideas, but with judgments. So far from being the primitive act of

¹ *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. I, pp. cix, cx.

² A. Seth, *Scottish Philosophy*, p. 73.

mind, Simple Apprehension or the knowledge of sensations *per se*, is a species of abstract contemplation."¹ "Our first having of a sensation is at the same time the knowledge of a present object, and (implicitly) of that object as somehow related to me."¹ Biran, on the other hand, develops farther rather than opposes the ideas of the English school. He reduces the theory of simple apprehension to more ultimate terms but does not substitute for that theory the view that "judgment is the primitive act of mind." The impression is something requiring analysis; but it is explained by a fact of immediate experience. The immediate knowledge of the self is a particular kind of simple apprehension rather than a judgment.

Another point of difference between Reid and Biran is in the character of the ontology which is required by their respective theories of knowledge. Seth says "it might be argued that by maintaining a theory of immediate perception, Scottish philosophy destroys the foreignness of matter to mind, and thus implicitly removes the only foundation of a real dualism."² Biran very explicitly teaches dualism. The resistance which meets the will in effort is foreign to the self. Our knowledge of reality may become more determinate; but that reality itself always remains an independent "other" over against the self.

The fundamental differences between Reid and Biran become still clearer when we consider their treatment of particular topics. As will is the central idea in Biran's system, and as it is in the act of will that we discover the self, it is advisable to consider what will is for Reid. His definition is as follows: "Every man is conscious of a power to determine in things which he conceives to depend upon his determination. To this power we give the name of will." There are some characteristics of will which we must notice. First, "every act of will must have an object": a man cannot "will without willing something." Second, "the immediate object of will must be some action of our own." Third, "the object of our volition must be something which we believe to be in our power and to depend upon our will." Fourth,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 78.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

"volition is accompanied with an effort to execute that which we willed." Finally, "in all determinations of the mind that are of any importance, there must be something in the preceding state of the mind that disposes or inclines us to that determination."¹

In Reid's first observation concerning the will, that is, in the statement that the will must have an object, we meet with a divergence from Biran's view. For from the latter standpoint, the will, it is true, meets a resistance, but not with an object in the strict sense of the term. There comes to be an object only after the will has been in activity and the resistance has been abstracted from the complete act of will. In fact, the resistance does not become an explicit object until the distinction between inner and outer experience has been developed. Passing to the fourth characteristic of the will, that is, that it must be accompanied by effort, we find another distinction between the views of Reid and of Biran. With the latter, effort is not a second act supplementary to the act of will, but it is our consciousness of the act of will, the will meets with resistance. Reid thinks of the matter in psychical terms, while Biran makes the act depend on the presence of the muscular system. Finally, in Reid's view, there must be a motive to will, but for Biran the will is the basis of all cognitive experience, and consequently of all explicit motives. These points make clear the radical difference in the ideas of will that are found in the two systems, and we now pass on to differences on other important questions.

Reid makes "judgment and belief in some cases precede simple apprehension." "Instead of saying that the belief or knowledge is got by putting together and comparing the simple apprehensions, we ought rather to say that simple apprehension is performed by resolving and analysing a natural and original judgment." "The belief which accompanies sensation and memory is a simple act of the mind which cannot be defined."² Moreover this belief applies to the subject as well as to the object. "Thought must have a subject and be the act of some thinking being." The existence of the subject and object are not derived from sensations. "They are judgments of nature . . . judgments not got

¹ *Collected Writings* (8th ed.), pp. 530-533

² *Ibid.*, pp. 106-108.

by comparing ideas, . . . but immediately inspired by our constitution." ¹ With Biran the idea of the subject is derived from an analysis of inner sensation ; the idea of the object is developed from the resistance which meets conscious effort.

With Reid notions or conceptions are distinguished very sharply from sensations. They are the "result of our constitution," the power by which they are acquired "is neither sensation nor reflection." Extension, figure, and motion "are not ideas of sensation, nor like to any sensation." ² With Biran, sensation and perception differ simply in respect to the degree of volitional activity involved. In sensation there is merely enough activity present to maintain consciousness, but in perception the self is in some degree attentive.

Reid answered Hume by attacking the principle that ideas, or impressions, are the only reality. The self and the object are real and are known by natural judgments. Biran answered Hume by finding an idea, or impression, which had been overlooked in the analysis, that is, the feeling of self discovered in the consciousness of effort.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 110.

² *Ibid.*, p. 128.

SECTION IV.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS OF BIRAN'S PHILOSOPHY.

In giving a general account of Maine de Biran's philosophy in its completed form I shall follow the divisions of the subject which he made in the *Essai sur les fondements de la psychologie*. We shall look first at the primitive fact of consciousness, then at the deduction of the categories, and finally at the psychology. First, there is a description of the primitive fact of voluntary activity in which the author maintains that we have a direct perception of the self. This fact is for him the real basis of consciousness. Secondly, the primitive fact of consciousness gives what he regards as a real basis for the ideas of substance, causality, and unity. We have then in this connection his metaphysics in so far as he has given one. Finally, in the third part of the work there is the psychology proper, in which the principle of voluntary activity is traced through the various degrees of relation that it sustains to an underlying basis of unconscious and purely affective life.

Maine de Biran's philosophy is founded upon psychology, in the sense that he aims to derive rather than postulate epistemological principles. The beginning is a fact, but it is not a fact in the common signification of the term, in the sense of a relation independent of the subject; it is a fact of inner experience (*sens intime*), the primary activity of consciousness. The philosopher is very careful to define this ultimate factor of experience and knowledge. He distinguishes it from simple sensation by elaborating the difficulties involved in the contingent and unrelated character of external impressions; and he differentiates it from perception in general by emphasizing the relative character of objective knowledge. We do not apply the name fact to all that exists for us, all that we perceive without or sense within ourselves, or all that we can conceive. We have a fact only when we are aware of our own individual existence and of the existence of

something else, an object or modification, that accompanies our own existence and yet is distinct from it. "A fact is nothing unless it is known, unless there is an individual and permanent subject which knows."¹

This definition excludes mere sensation from the category of fact. And, in consequence, we cannot place the origin of knowledge in sensation. So long as the subject is identified with its modification, so long as it has no individual existence, or self, and is not distinguished from the object that is known, we do not have knowledge. On this distinction rests the fact of knowledge which we can justly call primitive, for nothing can be conceived without it and all other knowledge presupposes it as a necessary condition.² To be self or in self is essential if one is to perceive the simplest fact or know in the slightest degree. There is also a negative proof of this position. Experience shows that the more vividly we are affected, the less our impressions or the objects which excite them are facts for us. Consequently, we can conclude that there would be no knowledge of any kind for a purely sensitive being. The primitive fact is not the simple sensation, but the idea of the sensation which is possible only with the individuality of the self.³

The conception of the basis of consciousness as a relation between the self and the not-self seems at first to exclude the distinction of facts of inner experience from sensations and representation in general. The self and the object are known only in immediate relation to each other. How is the self or the single subject to know itself as independent of all sensible modifications. According to Biran the confusion results from neglecting to determine the primary condition which makes external objects possible. If the self is identified with its affective sensations and exists only in and through them, it does not exist for itself. There is no relation, no fact, and no knowledge. But if the self is distinguished from, as well as united to, each of its sensations, so that there are internal facts of consciousness and specific sensations, the latter

¹ *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. I, p. 36.

² *Cf. ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 37-38.

³ *Cf. ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 38-39.

are purely passive in principle and cannot serve as the basis of knowledge ; they are merely hypothetical elements.¹

Sensations are constantly varying both on account of external causes and on account of the condition of the sense organs. Sometimes they disappear from consciousness, at other times they obscure it by their intensity. They have not the permanence which we expect in the source of knowledge. In themselves they do not have the nature of relations. If they gain this character through the judgment of externality they are facts but are no longer ultimate. The primitive relation cannot be determined so long as one of the elements is a vague notion of a sense object. No one of the external senses can supply the kind of term required in that constant union which is the fundamental relation of consciousness. We are compelled to look beyond sensation for the necessary element in the original duality, or the primitive fact of inner experience. For the requirement of constant and reciprocal relation of the two terms is not satisfied either by affective or by representative sensation. Even when sensation is regarded as a primitive duality, the subject as simple and permanent is distinguished from an object or mode, which is variable ; but this is to describe elements which are abstracted from the relation which alone causes them.²

After this negative argument to show that sensation cannot be the ultimate datum which we require, Maine de Biran proceeds to determine positively the nature of the primitive fact. If the subject is one and simple, and a real existence rather than a pure abstraction, we can say further that the self, like any other existence, is a fact only as a variable or permanent mode of a substance, or as an effect of a cause which determines it. We have to ask if the self is given to itself in the primitive fact as a modified subject, or as a cause, or force which is productive of certain effects. This question has been neglected, or rather it has been assumed that the soul is a substance, and thus no place has been left for the principle of activity. It is true that we have in our minds the idea of substance ; but it is not difficult to prove that

¹ *Cf. op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 40-43.

² *Cf. ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 45.

the notion depends upon a deduction from primitive facts. We find also in ourselves the notion of cause or force, but prior to the notion is the immediate experience of force. This experience is no other than that of our very existence, which is inseparable from activity. We could not know ourselves as individual persons, if we did not feel ourselves as the cause of movements produced in the organic body. The cause or force actually applied in the movement of the body is active and is called will. The self identifies itself completely with this active force. But only through its exercise is the force a fact for the self; and this activity occurs only in relation to an inert or resisting limit. The force is actualized only in relation to its goal; and the goal is determinate only in relation to the force which tends to move it. The fact of this tendency is effort, or volition, which is the primitive fact of inner experience.¹

Effort is a fact, since it consists in a relation between a force and the limit of the force. The fact is primitive, since it is the first in the order of knowledge. The first sensations which give the first perceptions are themselves aroused by the same individual force that creates effort. This primitive effort is a fact of inner experience, because it does not go beyond its immediate application, the inertia of the physical organs. It is the simplest of all relations, since all our perceptions depend on it as their essential condition and formal element; and the judgment of externality rests on and is an extension of it. Finally, it is the single relation which is invariable; the constant result of an identical force acting on an identical goal.² In the *Anthropologie*, Maine de Biran gives a somewhat closer determination of the nature of the effort which is a fundamental fact in his system; the active element does not depend upon the passive element in human nature. "Life and the material organism, which is an actual and perhaps a necessary condition of certain forms of thought, does not originate the thought."³ To bring this out clearly, movement is classified as instinctive, spontaneous, or voluntary. Spontaneous movement is that which is "produced by the direct action of the brain,"

¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 47.

² Cf. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 48.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 376.

while instinctive movement is "produced by a reaction of the same center following sensible impressions of the inner organs." The important question for Maine de Biran is the relation of the several classes of movements. "The development of animal life must necessarily lead to the transformation of the first insensible, instinctive movement . . . into spontaneous movements which can be sensed in the animal and distinctly perceived when they exist in man. We ask now if the spontaneous movements can be transformed immediately into voluntary movements."¹ Physiology shows that the cerebral center functions in automatic as in voluntary movements. But "something more enters into the activity of the will in bodily movements than enters into the functions of the nervous and cerebral organism, and that something more, under whatever title it is expressed, must be considered as . . . a hyper-organic force,"² which stands to the nervous system as the latter stands to the muscular system. This is a characteristic of man as distinguished from the lower animals. Spontaneous movements which form the transition from instinct to will are "the limit of development of the purely animal life," but "the beginning of the active life." We catch a glimpse of the passage from spontaneous to volitional movements in waking. Then "the self reënters its domain and seizes the products of a force which is not its own."³

In a letter to Ampère, Biran says that "the sense of effort is the same as the *active* muscular sense."⁴ He does not admit effort in the "mere action of the hyper-organic force on the brain, but in that action transmitted to the muscular organism."⁴

The cause of the effort becomes self through the distinction which arises between the subject of the free effort and the limit which immediately resists the effort. In this sense, the consciousness of effort is the self and is known in its activity. It cannot be known without this activity any more than we could really know what colors are without visual sensations. But in either case we can study the physical or organic means by which the

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 458-59.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 465.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 470.

⁴ A. Bertrand in *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, Vol. I, pp. 318-19.

experience comes about. This is especially necessary when dealing with inner experience, in order clearly to distinguish the perception of the subject from the perception of objects. The consciousness of effort is restricted to that part of the muscular system which the will can call directly into play. Voluntary effort differs essentially from the muscular sensation, or sensation of movement which we have when any part of the muscular system is moved by an external force. There is no excitation, or stimulus; but the movement is produced without any force other than that which perceives itself immediately in its exercise. When we symbolize the activity by physiological signs, we can say the volitional force passes from the center of the nervous system to the voluntary muscles, while the simple muscular sensation arises at the periphery and terminates at the nervous center. In the analysis we are compelled to resort to these physiological terms, but in the fact of inner experience we find that voluntary activity is really indivisible and instantaneous.¹

There are two moments of volitional activity. The first corresponds to the simple motor determination of the nervous system and does not seem to involve any inner perception; but even if it did, it would not be the symbol of individuality. The self does not know itself until it distinguishes itself, as subject of effort, from a resisting limit. Prior to this the inner perception can be no more than a vague consciousness of existence. The second moment corresponds to the muscular contraction and the report to the nervous center. This completes the inner perception of effort, which is inseparable from a resisting limit.²

As already indicated, we have in this statement of Maine de Biran's fundamental position the important characteristics by which he distinguishes his philosophy from other forms of empiricism and from rationalism. The sensation apart from the subject of consciousness is really nothing for that consciousness. The attempt to substantialize pure sensation, by neglecting its relation to the subject, and then to develop it into knowledge by means of a purely logical process was, according to Biran, the

¹ Cf. *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. I, pp. 208-12.

² Cf. *ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 212-213.

error of later empiricism, especially in the case of Condillac. This unfortunate result was due to the defective psychological analysis which neglected elements because they were not readily associated with particular objects in the external world. On the other hand, the error of rationalism was the fact that it substantialized the soul itself. A system was built on the idea of consciousness made absolute. With Descartes the beginning was mind substance and its correlate material substance instead of the actual effort and resistance of psychological analysis. Leibnitz came nearer to an adequate statement by his emphasis of independent activity as the essential characteristic of substance ; yet he also made the force absolute, contrary to the evidence of introspection. In the primitive fact of our volitional activity Maine de Biran believes that he finds a datum that is at once dependent upon experience and yet can serve as a real basis for the explanation of consciousness. Experience, according to him, when accurately analyzed, yields a fact which has all the advantages of an *a priori* principle. The unitary and unchangeable character of effort is due to the circumstance that the two terms of the relation, the self, and the resistance remain constant. The resistance is primarily our own body. The general criticism of the empiricists and the rationalists is that the former did not carry their analysis far enough, while the latter carried it too far, and that each school substituted abstractions for facts.

But Maine de Biran himself does not avoid the fault of abstraction which he attributed to his predecessors. If we consider actual experience, we do not find his primitive fact in the isolated form in which he describes it. The distinction and the correlation of objective and subjective factors extend through all experience. Effort is not a conscious fact, unless it is judged. Consequently the effort which Biran makes a fundamental principle is not the result of a simple analysis of experience, but is derived only by abstraction from ideational factors which are always associated with it. Perception of the self is not given simply in experience. The difficulties of his position become apparent when we notice the implications involved in each of the two senses in which effort may be employed as an explanatory prin-

ciple of conscious activity. If, (1) while admitting that in simple analysis the external reference is as ultimate as volitional activity for consciousness, it is still maintained that from the point of view of origin the volitional factor is more ultimate; in other words, if we make the problem one of genesis, the effort is then no longer a primitive fact but a conceptual construction which we are using as a ground for the explanation of consciousness very much in the same manner in which Condillac used sensation, or Descartes used soul substance. More technically stated, Maine de Biran makes the feeling of effort, which he regards as the primitive fact of consciousness, serve also as the logical ground of consciousness. There is a confusion of method, a failure to distinguish the facts of introspective analysis from those of genetic description. He would doubtless himself say that there is no confusion, that his greatest merit was the discovery of a fact which was at the same time a principle of explanation. But in considering that discovery we should note that for him there is no fact apart from consciousness: the first fact is a relation. The primitive feeling of effort is the genetic source of the idea of an external world; but that fact itself involves the idea of another, a resistance. We cannot have an idea, a consciousness of another, or a resistance, apart from the idea of something, perhaps indefinite, which is in some sense external to the self. That is, the thought of consciousness involves the thought of a reference beyond the self. But if (2), the effort in question is taken to be logically but not temporally prior to consciousness, it is no longer the primitive fact of consciousness, in the strict sense. A logical distinction between inner and outer experience seems to be given a psychological significance, and in virtue of this distinction a psychological abstraction is made the ultimate principle of consciousness. These difficulties are raised with no desire to depreciate the value of Biran's emphasis of conscious activity, but merely to question the adequacy of his psychological basis of epistemology. The deficiencies of the method will be more apparent when we have seen its application in Biran's detailed accounts of the principles of consciousness and of the phenomena of mental life. We shall now consider his deduction of the principles of substance, causality, unity, *et cetera*.

SECTION V.

DEDUCTION OF THE CATEGORIES.

Passing to the deduction of the categories, we see that effort as it is found in the inner conscious experience, is the basis, according to Maine de Biran, of our ultimate metaphysical ideas. To the exercise of the faculty of inner perception, we owe not only the consciousness of the self but also the primary ideas of being, cause, substance, and unity. These ideas differ from the abstract class notions with which they are often confused. They are natural and necessary rather than artificial and arbitrary. They are the conditions of thought and belong to the beginning of knowledge instead of being mere means or symbols. And finally they are independent of the natural impressions with which they are associated. They cannot, however, belong exclusively to the very nature of an unconditioned and independent soul ; but must, on the other hand, have their origin in experience. We must not presuppose anything innate ; analysis should be carried as far as possible. With the results already attained in regard to the origin of personality, Biran thinks he can explain the ideas in question without referring them to sensation or to the nature of the soul. Prior to the self there is no actual or possible knowledge. Since it is only necessary to introspect in order to have the idea of being, of substance, of cause, and of unity ; we may say that each of the ideas has its immediate origin in the consciousness of the self. They can always be reduced from the form in which they appear to the immediate and permanent type which they have in inner experience.¹

The idea of force can be originally derived only from the consciousness of the subject who experiences effort. Even when the idea is already abstracted from the fact of consciousness, it still bears the imprint of its origin. We cannot conceive any force of attraction or repulsion in bodies without attributing, to some ex-

¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 248.

tent, to the bodies the individual force which is constitutive of the self.¹

The idea of substance can be derived from the elements of the fact of consciousness or from the primitive duality. It refers to what subsists or remains constant at the core of various manifestations, and to what is beyond the manifestations as their common bond of union. The first is the total form of effort which remains identical in the two terms, force and resistance; the second is the organic resistance which is associated with all sensible modifications. This organic resistance is a permanent base, a true substrate. It is no more an abstraction than is the subject of effort, or the self, of which it is the correlate. Beyond all variable modifications of sensibility, effort and resistance remain the same. They are subject and object or antecedent and consequent term of the fundamental relation of personality.²

Thus in effort and resistance, as they exist in inner experience, Biran finds the source of the abstract notions of substance and force. It is through the neglect of this ultimate source that insoluble questions have arisen in regard to the ideas. Some have wished to make the ideas absolute and to derive the real from the possible; others have denied the reality of the ideas, since they could not reduce them to clear representations of sense or imagination. The idea of substance and the idea of force which are derived from ourselves and conceived by a reference to ourselves have all the reality and truth of facts of inner experience; but their proof becomes obscure when they are applied to external things. When we abstract entirely from the consciousness of the self and leave only the bare exercise of effort, we have the material, so to speak, of the idea of absolute force. Yet, in spite of ourselves, a confused consciousness of our own force will mingle with that abstract idea. Similarly, by abstracting bare resistance from the consciousness of a continuously resisting limit, we form the notion of absolute or possible resistance, that is, of substance. This idea is always conceived under the form of passivity and modeled after the organic resistance which the self perceives when it is distinguishing itself in the exercise of effort.

¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 249.

² Cf. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 250.

Thus the abstract notion of substance is more obscure than that of force, and belongs to a point of view more foreign to us. When the primitive duality as the source of all knowledge is analyzed into its two elements, the subjective or formal side, the idea of force or activity, is made the principle of psychology. The objective element, as the prototype of the idea of substance, is taken as the principle of physics. This order cannot be set aside, that is, the notion of substance cannot be made the principle of psychology, or the notion of force the principle of physics, without distorting the purposes of the sciences. Moreover, if either principle is considered as absolute and the source which the idea must have in a primary relation is neglected, the true process of knowledge is inverted and the result is an abstract science which is foreign to the reality of things.¹ We find this scheme of the sciences repeated and elaborated in the psychology.

The primitive ideas always elude the imagination and sense-perception. The sense of touch, although it is very important in externalizing our ideas of force and substance, has nothing to do with their formation. We do not touch the substrate of tactual forms any more than we see the real substance of light. Substance cannot be represented by the imagination. It is conceived only in necessary relation to a certain union of qualities of which it is regarded as the subject. But, although the imagination has to do only with combined elements, or groups; reason must nevertheless presuppose the reality of the subject. It is the unrepresented subject and not the modes that is conceived as existing and acting.²

The reality of the principle of causality depends, according to Maine de Biran, upon the possibility of identifying it with self-consciousness or with the primitive fact of consciousness. We substitute a logical entity for a fact when we begin with the abstract idea and set up the category of causality, or when we regard it as a form of the mind, or a mere regulative principle of knowledge. But we do not recognize the real value of the principle of causality when we regard it simply as the law of phenomenal suc-

¹ *Cf. op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 253.

² *Cf. ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 254-5.

cession. It is easy, however, to show the difference, or even the opposition, that there is between the idea of succession and the idea of productive cause. The empiricists failed to do away with the real application of causality. They tried to reduce all cause to laws of succession; but while they were able to discover some laws and to classify effects, the real efficient causes remained indeterminate. Each class of phenomena involved an unknown something which was felt to be incommensurate with any sensible idea. The efficient cause obstinately persisted in the mind even when its manner of operation was entirely hidden from the imagination. The failure of the empiricists to substitute the relation of succession for that of causality has been an argument in favor of the *a priori* character of the latter principle. *A priori* ideas, however, disappear before introspection. The idea of cause has its primitive type in self-consciousness where it is identified with the idea of effort.

When Biran considered Hume's analysis of the idea of power, he found in the facts which were brought out another reason for the view already presented. After having shown that the principle of causality could not have its ground in external experience, Hume asked if the idea of efficient cause, or necessary relation, could be based on the inner consciousness of our own force, that is, on the power of the will over the physical organs or mental processes. He concluded that it could not. But the conclusion resulted from the denial of our ability to experience any force, in any other way than we experience the activity in natural phenomena. He made the value of external experience coördinate with that of internal experience, and thus cut himself off from the possibility of finding what he sought. In his view the influence of volition over the bodily organs "is a fact, which, like all other natural events, can be known only by experience, and can never be foreseen from any apparent energy or power in the cause."¹ Biran maintains that it is not a question of foreseeing, but rather of sensing or apprehending the existence of the force. Yet, as a matter of fact, the will or the very first voluntary effort is determinate and carries with it a vague consciousness of success,

¹ Hume's *Enquiries* (Selby-Digge), pp. 64-65.

otherwise we should have merely desire. It is this characteristic which distinguishes voluntary movement from sensitive reaction, and the facts of inner experience from natural phenomena. Hume thought we could not know actual volitional force because we do not know how it acts. His illusory assimilation of the two kinds of knowledge is the basis of his mistake. We know the power of the will over the voluntary muscular system, but we cannot represent it to ourselves as we can represent an external movement. The two processes are entirely different. We cannot perceive colors by picturing to ourselves the optic nerve, the retina, and the luminous object. To know objectively the occult relations of our own volitions, we need at the same time to be ourselves and another. The power is known as presented only to the motor being. The effect or movement is represented only as we separate ourselves entirely from the being to which we attribute the effect. It is only thus that the latter becomes an external phenomenon. When we wish to conceive the power in its effect, we must establish the homogeneity between the two terms of the primitive relation of causality. We must take account of the fact of consciousness. There the subject of the effort perceives himself, in inner experience, as the cause of a movement which is simultaneously sensed, not represented, as an effect.

The inevitable effect of habituation is to lessen, by insensible degrees, the consciousness of the movements or acts which are repeated. This result is especially marked in the case of inner experience. The principle becomes dim as its external manifestations grow clear. Just as a light of uniform intensity to which we are accustomed is not perceptible in itself and is known only from the objects which it illuminates, so voluntary effort tends to disappear among the various modifications to which it gives a base and an individual form. Thus the feeling of power or will decreases, and the causes of external phenomena get the ascendancy in consciousness. Necessitated by our nature to direct our attention to these causes, we come to attribute to them the very activity by which we have made them our objects. Thus, habit which Hume regarded as an illusory influence in the formation of our idea of cause is the very factor which tends most to blind

us to the origin of that idea and the true principle of its application.¹ The same circumstance which led to the attack of skepticism upon the principle of causality has motived the errors of dogmatism. The natural relation which unites motor force to its limiting term and the subject of effort to resistance has been construed in terms of a mysterious influence, of the intervention of God, and of preëstablished harmony.

Lang gives a very sympathetic account of Biran's principle of causality, but is not, I think, able to vindicate its epistemological validity. He regards Biran's deduction of the category of causality as a successful answer to Hume's logical criticism, but concludes "that the French spiritualist has limited far too narrowly the sources from which the causal concept can be derived." We have as clear an evidence of "the spontaneous activity of the soul upon idea process, as we have of the influence of "the will on the physical organism." "Psychical causality" should be placed at least on a par with "muscular effort."² Lang distinguishes the causal law, "everything in the world has its cause," from the causal principle, "the existence and unchangeableness of natural law." "Biran seems to have felt these difficulties," since he thought that "our belief in the unchangeability of natural law rested" on the fact that "we must necessarily view natural forces after the analogy of the I as incorporeal and consequently unchangeable."³

Maine de Biran finds that unity and identity, as well as cause, are included in the primitive fact. From this original source they are extended by a kind of generalization to the phenomenal objects of external nature. The self perceives itself in effort, as constantly of the same unitary form. From the single self are derived the ideas of the unity of substance, cause, and finite existence. The objects of nature resist the one will, or effort, and can only be conceived in relation to that fundamental unity. In a purely sensitive existence all is simultaneous. But it is the nature of the motor force, which constitutes the self, to act only in an order of succession, that is, to be a single act of perception at

¹ Cf. *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. I, p. 265.

² *Maine de Biran und die neuere Philosophie*, pp. 59-62.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.

a time, for the very reason that it is simple. That which is simultaneous in sensation becomes successive in thought. But all succession must have a first term, and this leads to the question of the origin of personality. Identity, like substance, is based on the primitive fact of consciousness and has a double original type, in the subject and in the resistance of effort. Personality cannot be established on either of the terms taken alone.

According to Maine de Biran, Locke did not distinguish sharply enough the true personal identity which applies to the subject and to immediate perception, from the identity of an object of repeated perceptions and from soul substance. The two latter conceptions are derived from the first and should not be confused with it. The identity of soul substance is deduced from the identity of consciousness ; therefore the question whether personal identity can change while the soul substance remains the same is unnecessary.¹

Freedom is another ultimate idea which depends for its origin and validity on the nature of the self. Maine de Biran says : " Freedom considered as the feeling of a power in exercise presupposes the reality of that power, as the mere feeling of our existence proves to us the reality of that existence." ² Muscular sensation can become active, determined by the will, and passive, influenced by a force beyond the self. In this alternation in the fact of consciousness, we have the type of the ideas of freedom and necessity. To call freedom in question is to doubt the feeling of the self. Biran thinks that any one could deny his own existence as well as his freedom. Erroneous opinions in regard to freedom are occasioned by a confusion between desire and will. He defines the relation as follows : " Will is circumscribed by the same limits as power," " desire, on the contrary, begins where power ends and includes all the field of our passivity." ³ A further cause of error in this connection, according to Biran, is a very strong tendency toward the unconditioned, that is, a substitution of reasoning based upon the absolute nature of

¹ Cf. *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. I, pp. 279-280.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 291.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 290.

substances for the evidence of the primitive fact of consciousness found by introspection.

Cousin shows very clearly the difficulties in this derivation of freedom from the perception of muscular activity. "The theory of Maine de Biran considers the free act only in its external manifestation, in a remarkable fact without doubt, but which itself supposes the fact quite as profound and intimate, the fact of willing with its immediate and proper affect. Here, in my opinion, is the primitive type of liberty. . . . When we seek freedom in an act, we may be deceived in two ways: either we seek it in the intellectual element of the act, the consciousness of the motives, the deliberation, the preference, the choice, and then we cannot find it; for it is evident that the different motives . . . command the intelligence. Or we seek liberty in the physical element of the act, and we do not find it there at least constantly, and we are tempted to conclude that liberty is but an accident."¹

Maine de Biran distinguishes the ideas of reflection, substance, force, unity, and identity from abstract ideas in the purely logical sense of general notions. All general ideas are abstract, but not all abstract notions are general ideas. In analyzing a concrete totality into its elementary parts, the attention isolates elements which really exist only in the totality. But in the case of generalizations or comparison of different objects, the results are qualities which are common to the objects. The ideas of reflection differ both from the products of abstraction by the attention and from the products of abstraction and comparison. The ideas of reflection are individual and simple while the logical abstractions are collective. The general notions become less real and individual as they are extended to a greater number of objects; while the ideas of reflection approach nearer to real unity as they become more abstract. Logical abstractions have a purely nominal value; but the abstract ideas of reflection have a real value independent of any external application. Biran concludes that we should analyze the ultimate principles of science, if they are not founded upon facts of consciousness. When, on the contrary, the simple ideas of reflection are made the basis of

¹ Cousin, *History of Modern Philosophy*, Vol. III, Lecture XXV.

science, there is no opportunity for analysis. Science did not exist before the self; and analysis cannot extend beyond the self. Metaphysics will be the real positive science of inner phenomena and of all that can be deduced from these phenomena, provided it starts with the fact of consciousness as a primitive "given," to be established but not to be explained or analyzed. It will be an abstract science lost in definitions and hypotheses without beginning or end, if it starts from general principles and attempts to establish science beyond all actual existence.¹

Maine de Biran very naturally refers to Locke's treatment of general ideas. Empiricism tends to regard all concepts as having only a logical value; Locke, however, distinguished between mixed modes which are mere combinations of ideas, and general ideas which necessarily admit of a real essence. Locke nevertheless "neglects too much the inner model which the mind must consult in forming" the ideas.² The model is not the less real because it is not external.

Such in outline is Maine de Biran's metaphysics which is based upon the fact of inner experience, the direct perception of the self, and the consequent extension of the characteristics of the primitive fact to cover the regulative principles of experience. The immediate problem is to consider how far these principles derived from psychological analysis can be regarded as furnishing an exhaustive account of the epistemological categories with which they are associated. Sir William Hamilton shows very conclusively that the perception of activity fails to account for the necessary character of the judgment of causality. After criticizing the subjective perception of causal efficiency on the ground that there is no consciousness of causal connection between volition and motion, he says: "Admitting that causation were cognizable, and that perception and self-consciousness were competent to its apprehension, still as these faculties could only take note of individual causations, we should be wholly unable, out of such empirical acts, to evolve the quality of necessity and universality by which this notion is distinguished. Admitting that we had

¹ Cf. *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. I, p. 305.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 184-185.

really observed the agency of any number of causes, still this would not explain to us, how we are unable to think a manifestation of existence without thinking it as an effect. Our internal experience, especially in the relations of our volitions to their effects, may be useful in giving us a clearer notion of causality; but it is altogether incompetent to account for what there is in it of the quality of necessity."¹ K  hltmann substantially agrees with Hamilton's second criticism. While he thinks that Biran was right in deriving "the objective concept of force from the subjective process"² of volition, he maintains that "the development of the concept of causality, that every change (effect) *necessarily* postulates another (change) (cause) for its genesis, belongs to the evolution of language and abstract thought."³

In this connection we may recall the historical relations of Maine de Biran. It was his belief that he had established philosophy on a factual ground. He was an empiricist, the intellectual descendant of Locke and Condillac, and like his predecessors is primarily an epistemologist rather than an ontologist. And it is clearly from the epistemological, and not from the ontological, point of view that he treats the concepts of substance and causality. As Locke assumed a material substrate in which the qualities of sensation inhere, and as Condillac had a stimulus which was beyond consciousness and never completely included in it, so Biran found a resistance to the will, which ultimately remained an extra-conscious datum. This is one of the prototypes of the idea of substance, the other is found in the volitional subject. There is for Maine de Biran, as for Locke and Condillac, a datum outside consciousness which is assumed as a condition of volitional activity. For this reason he did not find it necessary to regard the will as always active. The mind does not always think. In an ontological sense the will is not ultimate, it is merely the first principle of consciousness. The simple sentient life to which the will is always related, and in which it meets with a reality other than itself, becomes more prominent in the psychology. That is the part of Maine de Biran's work which

¹ *Lectures*, Vol. II, p. 392.

² *Maine de Biran*, p. 172.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

we have next to consider. The philosopher would be the first to emphasize the importance of the resistance which the will meets. He made no attempt to reach a fundamental unity ; but very explicitly maintained that the primitive fact of consciousness was based upon a relation which involved two terms. Life, which is simple in animality, the merely sentient experience, becomes dual in humanity, that is, in conscious experience.¹

¹ Cf. *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. II, p. 4.

SECTION VI.

DIVISIONS OF THE PSYCHOLOGY.

We now turn to the treatment of psychology which occupies the larger part of the chief work. According to Maine de Biran, an account of the principles of consciousness, even when their relation is shown to the primitive fact of voluntary effort, is not an exhaustive statement of the characteristics of human nature. Before the life of relation begins, there are impressions and instinctive movements coördinated with the impressions, and there is also, at least, a slight degree of pleasure and pain. Life involves the fact that the organism is affected either pleasantly or unpleasantly. Affections are the simple modes of pleasure and pain which make up a life purely sentient, and out of relation to self or to objective existences. There is a class of passive faculties which are subordinate to and developed with the affections. These constitute the animal nature, but since man is an active self as well as a sentient animal, they make up only one element of human nature. They differ essentially from the active faculties of the intelligent being, yet in man the two elements are closely united and constantly exercise an influence on each other. The factors are combined in a manner which varies according to the degree of development which the relational life has attained. In order to make his method clear, Biran attempts to isolate the two kinds of elements in human nature. By a preliminary analysis he hopes to gain a higher stage of perfection in his account of the psychological compounds. When the elements are once abstractly isolated, it is possible to understand the part that each plays in the phenomena of the mental life. By a study of the relation of the active subject to the purely affective life, which gives the first real content to the act of will, Biran concluded that the phenomena of feeling, sensation, perception, judgment, volition, *etc.*, could be classified in four systems. According to him the classification is not to represent logical

abstractions, it is not founded on vague analogies, but is dependent on real factual distinctions.

The first, or affective, system has to do with the simple modes of passive sensibility. Under this head there is an analysis of the various kinds of sensation considered with reference to simple affective impressions which they are capable of receiving, and with reference to the forms of stimulus which are correlated with their specific sensibility, but without regard to effort or the activity of the self.

In the second, or sensitive system, the personality is constituted by active effort. Our subject is no longer a merely sentient being which simply lives, that is, is affected without knowing its own life. An active self is united to the passive, sentient organism. The self perceives that it is in relation to the different sensible modifications and retains its identity while the modifications change. Nevertheless, at this stage, the self is merely the spectator of passive modes which are produced in the living organism without the active exercise of its own force. Yet the second system differs essentially from the first. The self feels the affective impressions, it localizes them in particular organs, and attributes them to causes outside itself. That is, certain relations of causality which the affections do not primarily include are associated with them, and the various modifications are no longer mere physiological facts; they are modifications of a self. Sensations are the "first composite modes." "The self is united to sensible impressions and participates as an interested spectator, without exercising its own characteristic activity."¹ This sensitive system is the first in the order of knowledge, but the second in the order of progress by which the sensitive and motor being raises itself from a purely affective state to personality and the various degrees of knowledge.

The third or perceptive system includes modes to which the self is more closely related and in which it enters as an active participant. This relation requires that the organ which receives the impression be under the control of motor force. Although the force is still subordinate to the impression, it gives the sensa-

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 6.

tion the form of a unity in multiplicity. A perception is an impression in which the self participates by an action which is subsequent to the effect of the external object. Biran defines this third system as follows : "The perceptive system includes all the phenomena arising from the action of sensible objects combined with that of a will, which is still subordinate to the impressions that occasion or motive its first exercise."¹

In the fourth system, the self is united with modes which are characteristically active. They cannot begin or persist without an express act of will. The object or external agent is here subordinate ; the impression is dependent upon activity which is volitionally determined. The active modes are homogeneous with the primitive constitution of the personality. They are only an extension of effort ; but they refer to some foreign resistance or to results which are perfectly distinct in consciousness from the cause which produces them. Here the will has, at the same time, immediate apperception of the cause and intuition of the effect. The basis of the fourth system is thus : "The act of reflection joined with perception, or the fact of inner experience (*sens intime*) with the objective phenomena."²

The systems just outlined serve as the general plan for Maine de Biran's psychology. In his opinion the divisions have a real basis in fact, but in reality they are logical rather than introspective distinctions. The whole construction depends upon the different ratios in which conscious activity is related to the underlying affective life. The affective life itself, however, as already noted, is extraneous to consciousness. It is not a fact in the sense of a primitive fact, but of a fact for an other, an outside observer. In this respect Biran's psychology may be regarded as based upon logical abstraction.

We shall consider his psychology more in detail by referring to his treatment of each of the four systems. It is in this connection that he shows the part that the will actually plays in his philosophy.

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 8.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 9.

SECTION VII.

AFFECTIVE SYSTEM.

Simple affection is the element that is left of a complete sensation when we abstract the self, together with the forms of space and time and the idea of causality. Affection, however, is not regarded as an abstraction, but as a real mode which makes up all our existence at the first and at all other times when the intellect becomes entirely inactive, as in sleep, or when the self is completely lost in sense impressions.¹ Lower forms of life always remain at the affective stage. The beginning of the capacity to be affected is possessed by the simplest types of organic life ; and the higher animals can be regarded as a multitude of lives united into a single life, or as a multitude of constituent affections united into a single result. If the living being is considered as an aggregate, and we abstract from individual unity, two features can be distinguished in an impression made on any particular organ ; first, the modification which that particular organ undergoes, and secondly, the modification of the entire sensitive system. The relative importance of these two modifications constitutes the affection as painful or pleasant in itself, that is, quite apart from comparison or even from consciousness. If the particular modification is relatively much stronger than the general modification, the affection is painful, if not, it is pleasant. The painful or pleasant impression sets up movements which respectively tend to set aside or to maintain the impression.

At the beginning there is a vague feeling of life without personality. Life is the condition of sentiency. The impressions, whether they are of organic or of external origin, are confused with the general feeling of life, and for a long time retain this indefinite character. But with the further development of life the general excitatory character of the impressions diminishes and the particular affections can manifest themselves. Thus the materials

¹ Cf. *Œuvres philosophiques*, Vol. 3, pp. 239-240.

of distinct perception are separated and the personal element alone is wanting to complete the first phenomenon of external representation. The impressions derived from the different sense organs differ in the degree of ease with which they lend themselves to association with the self. Some always preserve more or less the character of general affections and thus remain somewhat confused; others are more distinct and more disposed by nature to be localized or coördinated with their particular sense organs. The latter class easily admits the forms of space and time.

In reference to the sense of touch, Maine de Biran says, that when we abstract effort from the affections, they reduce to an absolutely passive character and are deprived of all perceptive elements, of all form of space and time and of all idea of cause or substance. The affections correlated with the organs of taste and smell are very slow to differentiate themselves from the general affective system and even then tend to revert to a confused condition. But in the visual and auditory affections there are characteristics which promote the association of the passive affections with the self. These immediate passive intuitions are, in the case of vision, a natural coördination of colors and the "vibratory" character in virtue of which images are prolonged and reproduced, and in the case of audition, the simultaneous and successive distinctions of tones. In both instances the passive intuitions are due to the anatomical structure of the sense organs.¹

Every modification leaves a trace in the organism, and thus influences later modes of existence. Yet there is no memory at the affective stage, since there is no consciousness. The feelings of attraction or repulsion, which become explicit in the conscious state, are often the results of affective modifications which the living being has sustained in a preconscious state.² The intuitions also leave images which are reproduced spontaneously either in their original order or in some accidental arrangement. And the movements of simple reaction to stimulus leave after them tendencies from which spontaneous movements arise. Spontaneous movements are accompanied by a sensation of a unique kind.

¹ Cf. *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. II, pp. 25-31.

² Cf. *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 35.

In its origin this sensation is not attended by the feeling of motor force ; but that feeling is immediately related to it. At this point the feeling of effort or of the self arises. Thus sensation and affection are for Maine de Biran the means of developing active faculties, but they are not transformed into faculties of a higher order.¹

The affective system just outlined is the foundation on which psychology is developed rather than a part of the science itself. With the sensitive system in the next section we have the beginning of the psychology in the strict sense of the term. The sharp distinction between the merely affective life and consciousness is also brought out in the work *Division des faits psychologiques et physiologiques*. Biran says : "The self is primitive . . . there is nothing anterior or superior to it in the order of knowledge."² In another place he speaks of the line "which separates forever the physical from the moral sciences, and especially the science of living and sentient organisms, physiology, from the inner science of beings which are intelligent and active, moral and free, psychology or ethics."³

¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 39.

² *Œuvres philosophiques*, Vol. III, p. 174.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 144.

SECTION VIII.

SENSITIVE SYSTEM.

The second, or sensitive system, is constituted by the simple union of the self with the phenomena of the first system, already described. When the subject of effort distinguishes itself from the body as a whole, or the various parts of the body that are subject to the control of will, there is a natural foundation for judgment. This is the beginning of the relational life. Maine de Biran here follows the general scheme of classification which he adopted in the first system. The self is simply associated with impressions and invests them with the forms of space and time ; it becomes a spectator without producing changes by an express act. By this simple union of the self with the affections we have affective sensations, by the union of the self with intuitions, representative sensations, and by the union of the self with those effects of affections and intuitions on the organism, memory.

To begin with the union of the self and the simple affections, we find that the resulting affective sensations are of two kinds, particular or general, according as they are, or are not, localized in the body. In the latter case the feeling of effort tends to be confused or absorbed in the affective sensation ; in the former case impression and resistance to effort are felt as occupying the same place, but are not confused.

The intuitions differ from the affections in the fact that they become more distinct through continued repetition. The self, moreover, is united with them in a particular way. They can never obscure the feeling of the self, and when united with it the relation is preserved with more constancy and uniformity than in the former case. They also share in the primitive mode of coördination in space. The self from its very origin cannot be separated from this mode ; it does not, however, change the form of the intuition but receives that form ready made from laws of the organism which do not depend upon volition.

There are three kinds of memory to be distinguished, personal, modal, and objective. The first is a necessary condition of the other two. In fact, it is the simple union of the sense of effort with the organism. The sense of effort which does not result in perception, but only extends to the voluntary muscles, constitutes mere consciousness and also the duration of the self, or personal identity, that makes memory possible. An examination of the waking consciousness shows that the subject of effort recognizes immediately his identity, his continued duration; he senses that he is the same that he was before sleep. No special impression to motive distinct memories, nor any determinate relation between the present and past time is necessary in order to bring about the feeling of identity. For these reasons Maine de Biran concludes that personal identity is sensed independently of affections, or of the passive intuitions of sensibility; that identity, or the duration of our own personal existence, is the cause of objective memory, not the result as Locke maintained;¹ and that the feeling of uniform duration is the necessary antecedent of the idea of time. A very low degree of self-activity is sufficient to give us the idea of personal identity and the idea of duration. But some degree of activity is indispensable. The idea of self and the idea of time do not result either from the play of merely external impressions on the organism or from the pure cognition of external relations.

Modal memory refers to the quality of the modification which the self sustains. It is not inherent in simple affections, but only in sensations which are reproduced in a part of the body where they have previously been localized. These sensations are not recognized in their intensity but only in their general nature.

In objective memory, it is no longer merely our own being which we recognize, either immediately or in an internally repeated modification; we recognize or judge that an external representation is similar to itself, by correlating with it our own sense of duration. We recognize the resemblance of an actual intuition, with an image which is the result of a previous intuition. The element of identity depends upon personal memory,

¹ Cf. *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, II, Ch. XXVII, § 11.

while the element of resemblance, which is also essential to objective memory, depends upon external representation.

The most important fact to be noted concerning the sensitive system is that the self, when it unites with the simple modes of affection and intuition, invests them with the forms, which belong originally to it, and which are the conditions of its existence. The consequence is that all conscious phenomena necessarily involve the idea of cause. "That cause is self if the mode is active or perceived as the actual result of a voluntary effort; it is not-self, if it is a passive impression sensed as opposed to that effort, or independent of all exercise of the will."¹ "The *belief* in a cause, not-self, differs essentially from the *knowledge* of an external object. The first can be based simply on a sort of resistance to even the vaguest desire; the second rests on perceptible resistance to effort, or determinate will."² In this connection we have to remember that the self for Biran is a fact of experience, a relation discovered by introspection, or else we are in danger of giving his system too idealistic an interpretation. The affections united to belief, or the vague idea of a productive cause, take the character of relations and are called emotions.

There are as many kinds of emotions as there are affections associated with the self; but they can be divided into two general classes, emotions of love and emotions of hate. The first includes joy, hope, and security, according as the desired object conforms to our wish, or probably will thus conform, or is believed to be in our control. The emotions of hate are sadness, grief, and fear. In sadness we believe in the existence of a cause that can affect us disagreeably. In grief we believe that we cannot escape, and in fear, that we probably shall not escape the effects of the object. The emotions can be called desires. Desire differs essentially from need or want. The sentient being has need of all impressions which tend to maintain or develop its existence. And on that principle it seeks to avoid or repel all which are contrary to or destructive of existence. But the simple need does not make desire until it is joined to belief. Voluntary

¹ *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. II, p. 67.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 68.

movement may result from the influence of desire, but it may also be contrary to desire. In this respect it differs from instinctive movement in which the will can have no part.

With the consideration of affective sensation, representative sensation, memory, and emotion, Biran has accounted for all the classes of psychological facts which consist in the relation of the self in its simplest form, mere consciousness, with organic life. In the next section, the perceptive system will include facts which involve a greater prominence of the self, that is, a more active will.

SECTION IX.

PERCEPTIVE SYSTEM.

The attention is the basis of the third system of psychological facts, and it is only because attention is involved that the phenomena of the perceptive system differ from those of the sensitive system. Attention is nothing but the will in activity. But by this activity certain psychological modes acquire characters which they do not possess merely in their own nature and as subordinate to the laws of animal sensibility. Attention is a degree of effort superior to that involved in mere consciousness, that is, to the degree of effort which renders the external senses capable of perceiving or representing confusedly the objects that stimulate them. Here the effort is determined by an express will. The perception which was confused at first is isolated from all the accompanying impressions that tend to obscure it. The attention refers especially to the representative sensations which are already coördinated in space and time. It does not exercise any direct influence on the affective impressions. The act of attention does not render the impressions in themselves more vivid, but fixes the organs that are subject to the will, on the object, turns them away from all other causes of impressions, and thus renders the object relatively more clear.

In reference to the connection of attention with the particular sense organs, Maine de Biran notes that attention is not related to impressions of tastes and odors in so far as they are passively excited or received, but only in as far as they depend upon voluntary movement. The stimulus which sets up auditory sensations is at first the occasion of merely affective phenomena. All distinct perception or special activity of the attention is excluded. But the impressions are coördinated in time; and under this form of intuition, the attention is able to give them a character of activity. We do not determine what we shall *hear*, but we can

listen, that is, give to the sounds a more or less sustained attention which results in making the impressions more distinct.¹

Attention is a very important factor in vision. The structure of the eye is peculiarly adapted to movement and consequently is under direct control of the will. The result for consciousness is very different, according as we simply see an object or observe it with "active regard."² In the first case, we have a number of confused images; in the second case, one distinct image. Without the attention, several objects are sensed passively and simultaneously; with the attention, there are rapid movements which coördinate objects into one whole. In this connection it is interesting to notice Maine de Biran's account of the effect of attention on after-images. He says, that he has often tried the experiment of looking at the glass of a well-lighted window. If he looked at the window for some time, while dreaming of something else, the image of the window remained in his eyes, and he could see it almost anywhere. But if he looked at the window attentively, with a view of preserving the image, there was no such result, he no longer had an image, but a very distinct memory of the object.³ Attention makes the colors of an object relatively more clear and distinct. This effect, however, is brought about indirectly, that is, the influence of the attention is limited to the voluntary muscles, and does not extend to the fibers of the retina. Although attentive vision always proceeds by a succession of movements and is thus voluntary in principle, the movements become so rapid, easy, and automatic that they disappear from consciousness. The sensitive and motor being participates in vision, but does not realize, even in the most distinct perception, its own active part.

The sense of touch is especially important for Maine de Biran, because it is the means by which we have a direct knowledge of the not-self, and thus is the basis of the judgment of externality and of perception. The primitive fact of effort gives us a knowledge of our own body; but the degree of effort, which is the condition of mere consciousness is only sufficient to suggest an

¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 91-94.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 97.

³ Cf. *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 97.

indeterminate not-self. The tactual perceptions abstracted from resistance furnish unsupported images. It is the association of pressure with a resistance, sensed simultaneously in the same organ, which completes the relation of externality and establishes all our objective knowledge. The pressure alone, or the resistance alone, might be confused with an increase of inertia or with the resistance of the human body; but the union of a pressure and a resistance, which is opposed and not proportional to effort gives the idea of an external body. Neither visual nor tactual representations coördinated in space can give the idea of matter. The idea of a force capable of resisting voluntary movement, is needed as the substantial support of all representations. It is the center around which the sensations, especially those of pressure and color are grouped. In virtue of the association of the idea of cause with the sensation of pressure, that primary cause which, as the not-self of effort, is indeterminate becomes positive and determinate, as an absolute force. The absolute force differs very essentially from simple muscular resistance which always yields to the effort that constitutes the self. The latter is the essence of our own body, the immediate limit of effort; the former is the essence of external bodies, the mediate limit of effort. The existence of the external force has need of a sign in order to manifest itself in consciousness; and the natural sign is the representation of tactual extent. All the sensations which suggest the idea of an indeterminate not-self can be construed as signs of that idea; but pressure, which is associated in an immediate manner with the feeling of absolute resistance, is in a particular manner the sign of the existence of a positive and determinate cause. External nature is known directly in touch, but in the other senses only indirectly and as they are coördinated with touch.

After considering the origin of the judgment of externality, Maine de Biran analyzes the various forms that the judgment takes. In the primitive sense of effort we have a localization of the organs of the body. This can be effected without the sense of pressure, that is, by means of the simple resistance which the two hands, for example, could offer each other, even if they had lost all sensation. But this is not a localization by representation

in space, it is a mere intuition that the body and its various parts coexist with the subject of effort.

The substantial judgment is reached by abstracting from all the passive elements in the sense of touch and supposing a single organ, that is, by referring only to a unitary resistance which is essentially relative to unitary effort. To carry out this conception, it is not necessary to think of the resistance as absolutely unyielding unless we limit the subject of effort. According to Maine de Biran, the Stoical idea of a world-soul was founded on the thought of a will which is effective in the whole of nature. The important thing, however, is to consider the nature of the unitary resistance which opposes the will. If we abstract from all passive impressions and imagine a consciousness made up entirely of effort, then the object which human consciousness attains only by abstraction, is for this hypothetical consciousness an immediate perception, the single real existence related to the self. This judgment is substantial because it is the basis of all the composite relations of conscious life. Owing to the presence of sensations, we never have the true unity of resistance perfectly simple in the mind ; but, nevertheless, it forms together with the unity of effort, the double unity, which is the foundation of all that we perceive, within or without ourselves. On this simple relation rest the primary qualities of Locke to which is accorded a real existence in bodies. The qualities constitute, for Biran, the essence of bodies and they are attributed to a unitary resistance. But he points out that impenetrability and inertia are more fundamental than extent and motion.

The substantial judgment by which we attribute resistance and impenetrability to body carries with it a character of necessity ; the modal judgment, on the other hand, attributes the so-called secondary qualities, which are in reality simple signs, to the idea of body. It is an unfortunate misuse of language to call affective sensations, secondary qualities of bodies. The affective sensation, that is, the simple union of the self with the affections, is experienced as belonging to our own body ; the resistance is experienced as belonging to an external body. They are not confused, but as the second is constantly accompanied by the first a

new relation, that of causality, is set up between them. The exercise of active touch does not, however, constitute the relation of causality ; but, by its influence, the indeterminate cause, or not-self, the object of belief, becomes determinate as a positive force which can modify the sensibility in a particular manner.¹

There is a peculiar kind of non-affective impressions that occupy an intermediate place between the modes of our sensibility and the modes of resistance. These impressions, Maine de Biran describes as perceptions united to the relation of externality. They are the subjects of his objective judgments. These perceptions are naturally projected into a vague space from which the self is distinguished in consciousness. They neither belong to the organs, like affective sensations, nor are they at first localized in the resisting continuum. The localization indicated in the objective judgment is the product of the experience of touch and of voluntary movement. The perceptions of vision and passive touch which are given at first in a two-dimensional non-resisting continuum receive a definite direction and distance from the practice of touch.

Each of the sensations, abstracted from its affective character and also from its volitional elements, can be regarded as adapted to an aspect of the sensible world. They all are dependent upon the forms of sense, but none the less are caused by external bodies which are their permanent subjects. They stand in the same relation to the primary qualities of bodies that our affective sensations stand to the will. They are the true secondary qualities.

While the intuitions, or passive perceptions, leave after them images which are proportional to the original impressions ; the active perceptions, which are dependent upon the attention, leave representative ideas that share in their active nature. The intellectual operations which refer only accidentally to the passive impressions are always involved in active perception. The attention is not related in the same manner to all the senses ; and consequently there is the problem of determining the relation of the various active faculties, memory, judgment, and comparison,

¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 130-131.

considered as consecutive to the active exercise of vision and touch.

The self can revive only what it has contributed to the impressions. In the case of vision the sphere of voluntary activity is limited to an attention successively directed to the various parts of the field already presented in passive vision. But in the case of touch, by a series of movements to each of which corresponds a memory, the subject creates a unitary resistance. Here the associations are voluntary, as distinguished from the accidental associations of passive memory (the memory described under the sensitive system¹). The visual images precede and complicate the recall of the forms, but the sense of touch gives us the true notion of forms. On the exercise of this active touch is founded the act of memory, in the strict meaning of the term, "which is nothing but the repetition of the simple judgment of externality originally associated and repeated with each impression."²

At this stage we have Maine de Biran's transition from attention through comparison and generalization to the unifying function of intelligence. Comparison is not absolutely different from attention, but is an immediate result of the activity of attention. Perception is always unitary, like attention, and consequently we never can compare two perceptions, but only one perception with the trace left by another impression.³ If judgment is defined as the comparison of two ideas, the idea must mean more than an image. The idea must really involve three terms, the perceiving subject, the mode perceived and the exterior term to which the mode is related. In the comparison of two modes, for example, two colors attributed to the same object, the subject and the exterior term may remain the same, while only the modes compared vary. The result will be resemblance or diversity.

Spontaneous generalizations precede all exercise of the active faculties. Beginning with these vague generalizations, the attention abstracts and compares to form regular classes, which seem

¹ Cf. pp. 48, 49.

² *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. II, p. 151.

³ Cf. *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 155.

to embrace all the phenomena of nature under general titles. These general ideas depend upon the modifications compared, and consequently have a value relative to our organism. The classifications by comparison fail to deal satisfactorily with the reflective notions, such as substance and cause, since these ideas are identical and universal, and cannot be coördinated by resemblances.

The distinction between the abstract notions of reflection and the general ideas of comparison serves Maine de Biran both as a methodological principle and as a solution of the great question of mediæval philosophy. The attention which compares variable modifications and fixes on relations of resemblance, furnishes the method of the physical and the natural sciences ; while reflection, which deals with the invariable elements of the primitive fact, the self and the resistance, together with their related phenomena, opens to us the mathematical and psychological sciences. The general ideas have no more value than the nominalist attributed to them ; but the reflective notions have all the being which the realist attributed to universals.

After this very abstract analysis of the elements of an abstract psychological order,¹ Maine de Biran takes up the unifying function of consciousness, as it appears in attention. The human mind, according to him, tends constantly to reduce all the variety of its modes, objects and representations, to a unity of idea. This principle applies alike to the direct perceptions of the senses and to the most elaborate constructions of intelligence. Our first sensible ideas, far from being given ready-made by the external world, are the products of a true activity, and the same rule holds of our conceptions of every order. The purely sentient being obeys laws of association which it cannot know. But the intelligent being prescribes the association of which he shall take account. He chooses freely the elements that he shall unite, and and finding within the models for his constructions, he forms archetypal ideas of totality, harmony, and beauty, under which natural phenomena are classified. The faculty of creating these ideas is the highest attribute of intelligence. The principle of

¹ Cf. H. Taine, *Philosophes classiques du XIXe siècle*, p. 52, where Biran's work is described as "a mass of abstractions, a thicket of metaphysical thistles."

unity, which characterizes all intellectual combinations, does not appear in our merely sentient nature, but is based on the first exercise of perceptive activity.

In this connection it is very important to keep in mind the general facts of Biran's system, otherwise we might give this principle of unity a wider significance than it deserves. The principle of unity depends upon perceptive activity. Biran equates "perceptive activity" with "exercise of the attention,"¹ and "attention is only the will itself in exercise."²

The perceptive system occupies an important place in the psychology. After an analysis of the respective relations of attention to the lower senses, to vision, and to touch, the transition is made through active touch to the judgment of an external world. The various forms of judgment, substantial, modal, and objective are then described. Next we have an account of memory, in the active sense, that is, as involving attention, and as opposed to the passive forms treated earlier in the psychology. Following memory come comparison and generalization which lead to a distinction, very important from Biran's point of view, between abstract notions and general ideas. Finally the section is closed by a description of the unifying activity of consciousness which is, however, worked out in more detail in the next, or reflective system.

¹ *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. II, p. 137.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 83.

SECTION X.

REFLECTIVE SYSTEM.

The fourth, or reflective, system, which includes the last division of psychological facts according to Maine de Biran's classification, differs from the perceptive system in considering only the elements of unity or permanence in consciousness. Reflection is "that faculty by which the mind perceives, in a group of sensations or in a combination of phenomena the common relation of all the elements to a fundamental unity."¹ For example, several modes or qualities to a unity of resistance, several different effects to the same cause, variable modification to the same self, or repeated movements to the same productive force. It is difficult for us to conceive the unity of self and of cause, of subject and object in the variety of sensations; but the unity is not the less necessarily given to us with every perception or representation of which we are conscious. In another place Biran equates apperception and reflection and defines apperception as "every impression in which the self can recognize itself as productive cause, while it distinguishes itself from the sensible effect which its action determines."²

Reflection has its origin in the inner perception of effort or of voluntary movement. In accordance with the method followed in the earlier parts of the psychological treatment, we first have a reference to the organic condition which makes reflection possible. The problem here is to determine the means by which the primitive facts become explicit for consciousness. In the case of perception, it was active touch which opened the way to the knowledge of the external world. The same means will not serve in the present case, because passive touch is mingled with active touch in the same sense organ. The desired ground for reflection is a condition in which the sense of effort is united to some sense organs in such a way that its products shall assume a sen-

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 225.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 9.

sible form entirely subordinate to the will. The motor and sensitive being must refer movements to itself, as the unique cause, and also refer to itself the impressions which result from these movements. Then the attention which is always directed to the external results of voluntary acts will not differ from the reflection which is centered on the feeling of free power that effectualizes those acts. The required condition is found in the sense of hearing, taken in connection with vocal activity. In an analysis of the correspondence between vocal movements and auditory impressions, we may hope to discover the original laws of reflection. While the voice and hearing are closely related, the sensitive and motor functions are naturally separated. This separation of the organ under control of the will from the sense organs prevents any confusion of volition and its results, but the close relation prevents any external interference. The activity which produces the vocal movements is reflected in perception. The individual thus has a redoubled perception of his own activity. "In the free repetition of the acts that his will determines, he has the consciousness of the power that performs them. He perceives the cause in the effect and the effect in the cause; he has a distinct feeling of the two terms of that fundamental relation, in a word, he reflects."¹ Vocal activity and auditory sensation thus have characteristics which make them unique organs of reflection. Hearing may be called the special sense of the understanding. Biran considers that Locke was wrong in accepting reflection as an innate faculty, and that even Condillac did not carry analysis far enough in this particular.²

The first act of reflection is a consciousness of voluntary activity by means of some modification which results at least in part from that activity, that is, the perception of the cause in the effect that is sensed. From this perception, reflection goes on to distinguish elements which are coördinated in the same group, to observe the mode of their coördination, and finally to rise to universal ideas. By the first act of reflection, the subject perceives itself, as such, distinct from the resisting limit; and by a

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 232.

² *Cf. ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 235.

similar act of reflection the motor being, in articulating sounds, distinguishes the vocal effort from the effects produced. With this distinction signs are established.

According to Maine de Biran, man speaks because he thinks, rather than thinks because he speaks. The first use of the intellectual sign (the word) is dependent upon the primitive fact of consciousness, that is, the immediate inner apperception of the subject of effort as distinct from the resisting limit. The impressions of the animal are confused. The sentient being does not distinguish ; it is not a self distinct from impressions. The defect is not in articulation, since some animals can imitate very well the sound of the human voice.

The ground of the reflective notion is in us independent of all signs. But there is a great difference between confusedly perceiving several modifications united in a whole, and perceiving distinctly the abstract modifications. The latter perception is made possible by means of language signs. The individual perceives that he exists from the first exercise of effort ; but it is still true that he does not have a distinct notion of his existence until he can connect the primitive judgment with a permanent sign. Similarly, in order to have a distinct notion of resistance, substance, unity, or cause, it is necessary to employ signs ; for otherwise these ideas remain confused in the groups of which they constitute the essential forms.

The treatment of words leads Maine de Biran to a further consideration of memory. He again very consistently emphasizes its active character. Intellectual memory arises from a repetition of an act of will. It has to do only with perceptions which are related to the sense of effort. Mere affections fall beyond the power of memory. They may be accompanied by intuitions or perceptions, which can be remembered and thus we can know that we have experienced pleasantness or unpleasantness, but the simple affection cannot be revived. Memory differs from imagination. The first is an active faculty which conserves ideas by means of their signs ; the second is a passive faculty which preserves traces of impressions. In every thought there is a hidden activity of the voice and the sense of hearing ; " we

“speak to ourselves very softly.”¹ Since the signs are voluntary movements, they become obscured by habit and are lost in the concrete perceptions. Intuitions and images occur with the memory signs, but they follow their own laws. In the exercise of memory, the representation of ideas is subordinated to the recall of voluntary signs; while in the exercise of imagination, the reproduction of images is independent of the accompanying signs. The result is that we can recall only phenomena in which we have had an active part, that is, that we ourselves have made, combined, or intentionally imitated.

Reasoning is the most important topic that comes in for consideration under the reflective system. Maine de Biran criticizes the abstract view that reasoning is mere subsumption of particular under general ideas. The deduction from general to particular presupposes that the subject of the reasoning is a general term. The process is analytic and the relation between the terms is only quantitative. But the actual judgments of external experience have individual and concrete subjects made up of diverse sensible qualities. Each judgment is a step in the analysis of the object; but the series of judgments of experience is not properly called reasoning, because there is no necessary relation between the judgments or between the series of judgments and the subject. However far induction is carried we cannot reach a necessary relation. The major premise becomes false by representing a contingent fact as an absolute truth. True reasoning, on the other hand, depends upon necessary and eternal truths, such, for example, as are found in geometry and metaphysics. The purely logical necessity found in the analysis of a general idea, a necessity which consists in fidelity to the linguistic conventions that have created a collective sign, must not be confused with the necessity which results from the nature of things. Reasoning based on general ideas is hypothetical, since it treats the resemblances, which determine the genus, as identities. Biran would agree with Hume that sciences based merely on external experience have only a descriptive validity. Moreover, each philosopher maintains that mathematics (arithmetic and algebra) has

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 248.

universal validity.¹ But they base their doctrine on different grounds : Hume on the principle that mathematical judgments are purely analytical ; Biran on the principle that they are deduced from a real fact, the resistance which meets the will. Hume denies the validity of metaphysics. Biran affirms its validity as a deductive science based on the psychological fact of effort.²

Reason "is the faculty of perceiving relations between simple beings or between the different attributes of the same simple being. It presupposes the faculty of conceiving or judging the existence of such a being,"³ that is, it involves reflective acts. Under this condition the subjects are identical and not merely similar. Since the relations are independent of the modifications of sensibility we have the required characteristic of necessity. Attributes are related to subjects, not as the particular to the general, but by necessary dependence. They arise by the development of the subject. Judgments which express this dependence are synthetic. Analysis is merely a preparation which stops at the simple subjects, that is, at the starting point of reasoning. For example, by acts of abstract reflection, we reach the distinct conception of the two elements of the fact of consciousness, the self and the resistance. It is impossible to reduce these ideas of real existences by any further analysis.

After having perceived the relations of the attribute to the subject in a judgment, the mind perceives the relation of several judgments to each other, or the necessary dependence in which the several attributes stand to the same essence. "Reasoning thus consists in a succession of synthetic judgments which have a common real subject,"⁴ and which are united so that the mind perceives their reciprocal dependence, without having recourse to any idea foreign to the essence of the subject.

Less abstractly stated, Maine de Biran finds that the principle : "All that is true of a . . . class is true of all the individuals comprised in the class ; relates only to conditional truth. For

¹ Cf. *Treatise of Human Nature*, Bk. I, Pt. III, §1.

² Cf. p. 66.

³ *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. II, p. 263.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 263.

classes are the work of the mind." This is the fact when it is a question of relations perceived between qualities which vary in the individuals compared. But the case is different when it is a question of universal ideas or essential attributes, that are always the same in all objects to which thought refers them, and which are necessary conditions of all possible representation. Here we are dealing not with a kind or class, but with an individual. The principle of the syllogism can then be stated as follows: "All that is true of the subject of a universal idea is necessarily and identically true of the same subject considered in any other relation or combination."¹

Universal ideas are clearly illustrated by the science of mathematics, which, according to Maine de Biran, is not a science of conditional truth, but a science of true relations that subsist between noumena. These relations remain always the same, they are independent of all variations of sensibility, and they would not change by reason of any difference in the organization of the beings who perceive them.

Universal ideas, then, must have a basis in fact. Disregard of this necessity is the error of the philosophers who have abstracted from the foundation of reason and retained merely the form that it takes in language. By isolating the purely intellectual processes from the accompanying mental processes, they have attempted to reduce all logic to a universal algebra of ideas. But since the relations between ideas depend absolutely upon the nature of the ideas, the signs which express those relations, and consequently the logical forms which are functions of the signs, cannot be abstracted from the ideas themselves. That is, the intellectual process of determining the relation of the ideas can never be separated from the factual character of the ideas.

The actual idea includes all the attributes which make up, for us, the existence of the object, together with all the properties which the senses can discover. The coexistence of these attributes and qualities depends upon successive judgments of experience. The function of reason is to determine how all these

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 267.

properties are different expressions of the same essence. "Beginning with a primary attribute, for example, thought, or the feeling of individuality which constitutes the subject a self, or the resistance which constitutes for us what we call body, we deduce all the other attributes or modes that we know by inner feeling in the subject or by representation in the object."¹ The dependence of the idea upon the primitive fact is the first condition of reasoning. To reduce the process to a play of language is to abstract from the intellectual acts that unite judgments with each other and with immediate intuition.

The object of perception is given to the mind as simple. Perception is thus the immediate view of a simple and real subject. No further analysis can make the object itself more clearly perceived than it is by the simple fact of its immediate presence in the mind. But by abstraction from the notion of the perceived object we can discover in that notion elementary relations, which are distinguished by the aid of signs, but which are not themselves objects of perception. Thus, while we distinguish by signs the self, or effort, from resistance, there is no real perception of the self separated from the feeling of resistance. When the signs divide the totality of the object of perception into parts, the understanding sees these parts as necessarily related to the existence of the whole. Here begin perceptive judgments which develop the essence of the subject, not by making the notion more clear or distinct in itself, but by making it more adequate. They express the relation of the elements to the whole from which they are inseparable. The result is the logical composition of the object, the simple nature of which does not in reality change. All conception of necessary relation is thus connected with perceptive judgments. The possibility of correlation with perception becomes the mark which distinguishes the truth of absolute certainty from simple belief.

After the description of perceptive judgment we can easily understand Maine de Biran's conception of deduction. In his view, perceptive truths, that is, the facts of inner experience and their immediate consequences form the basis of all the work of

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 270.

the reason. The perceptive judgments are from their very nature undemonstrable. They are independent one of another, and consequently cannot be the result of any form of reasoning. But there are secondary truths which are related to each other and to the primary truths. Deduction is the process of arriving at these secondary truths and of determining their relation to fundamental truths. While the perceptive judgment is always actual, that is, it cannot be recalled without the immediate recognition of its proof, the case is different with deduced truths. When they are recalled they do not become self-evident, yet they are certain, for the intellectual memory, in recalling them, recalls at the same time their necessary dependence upon an established first principle. Without confidence in the memory no reasoning could take place; the mind would never get beyond the narrow limits of primary truths. Since the certainty of deduction is essentially different from the certainty of perception, there can be a conditional certitude without the slightest degree of absolute truth. Conditional truth only presupposes that the chain of reasoning has been regular; it has exactly the same value as the postulate from which it is deduced.

As already stated Maine de Biran makes psychology a pure deductive science. The elements of the primitive fact, when separated by reflective analysis from their synthetic union with impressions, become the true subjects of reasoning. Biran holds that all ideas which give phenomena a fixed character, or which establish necessary relations proceed from the self and not from sensations. The two terms of the fact of consciousness, effort and resistance, are the primitive and real subjects. Reduced to their essential attributes, they form the respective objects of the two sciences of pure reason, psychology and mathematics. The sciences of description and classification, which are based upon resemblances dependent upon our organism, are conditional. Natural science is truly deductive only because its facts involve the application of causal necessity.

Resistance as a factual unity is discovered by reflective abstraction. The result is the first mathematical conception. The idea is simple and individual; unity is subject or common antecedent

of all numerical relations. The judgments which have to do with that unity make up arithmetic. Geometry has its origin in the same real fact. The line is the coördination of resisting unities. In these sciences we can go on indefinitely without taking account of any foreign elements. The identical nature of the elements establishes the universal and necessary character of the relations.

Psychology is also an absolute science. It differs from mathematics in the fact that its subject (effort) admits of no schematism, or representation, similar to geometrical figures. While the self cannot be analyzed, it nevertheless occasions the reflective judgments which make up psychology. Identity, freedom, causality of the self and of the not-self, the differences between effort and its limit, are deduced from the primitive fact by a series of identical judgments. They are merely that fact seen from different points of view. Maine de Biran is never tired of insisting that it is not a question of "logical identities or of conditional truths, but of real identities, of inner facts, of absolute truths established by the inner sense."¹

Some of the natural sciences have a certainty only secondary to that of mathematics and psychology. There are two kinds of causality to be distinguished, "efficient" and "physical." In "efficient causality," "we conceive distinctly how a cause being given in its most immediate effect . . . other facts must necessarily follow."² In physical causality, the cause is not given or conceived in any effect which can be its immediate expression; and "the mind is limited to observing experimentally the order of phenomenal succession."³ Here the anterior phenomenon is the physical cause. Now in cases where there is an efficient cause as a first effect or known tendency, and we are dealing simply with this efficient cause and with the simple modes of space and time, we have certainty. This is true in regard to Newton's deduction of the system of the world, for he treated forces mathematically, not physically.

In true deductions, that is, those of the sort just mentioned, there is no presupposition; all is certain. There are, however,

¹ *Op cit.*, Vol. II, p. 324.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 330.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 331.

intellectual operations which take account of the mode of action of physical causes. The result is an explanation of a fact of experience, which has only a probable truth. In this method we always have the three steps, experience, hypothesis, and comparison of the hypothesis with the facts.

The fourth system concludes Maine de Biran's account of psychological facts. At first, he shows in detail how we arrive at an explicit perception of the self. The remainder of the section is given up to the application of the self, and of the other principles of unity which go with the perception of the self, *i. e.*, substance, and causality, to the problem of knowledge. Reason is described as depending on these ultimate factual principles. The processes of induction and deduction are evaluated and the fundamental distinction between the abstract factual notion and the general idea is again emphasized. Finally the validity of scientific knowledge is investigated and a natural classification of the sciences is presented. Before considering Biran's treatment of æsthetic, ethical, and religious problems, we shall briefly compare the psychology with the views of Condillac.

SECTION XI.

COMPARISON OF BIRAN'S *Psychologie* WITH CONDILLAC'S *Traité des sensations*.

A comparison of the psychology with Condillac's *Traité des sensations* shows the intimate relation in which Maine de Biran stood to this philosopher. It is not to depreciate Biran's originality or the value of his leading ideas that attention is called to this similarity. In the early part of the treatment it was shown in what respects Biran differed from Condillac; and constant attention has been given to the emphasis which the former placed upon the idea of activity. But here, having finished the account of the psychology, it seems necessary briefly to indicate the resemblance of that work to the *Traité des sensations*.

This similarity extends not only to the general structure of the work, but even to the solution of many important problems. First in reference to the principal divisions, we have found that Biran distinguishes four general systems under which he classifies psychological phenomena. There is the affective system which has to do with sensations abstracted from the idea of self, and with the simple modes of pleasure and pain. Then comes the sensitive system, the first in the order of consciousness, in which the self is present with the phenomena, an "interested" but inactive spectator. Next in order is the perceptive system, in which the self is an active factor in phenomena. And finally the reflective system, which treats of the active elements in consciousness without reference to the merely passive modes. Turning to the *Traité des sensations*, we find that here also are four general divisions. The first deals "with the senses which by themselves do not judge of external objects,"¹ and shows "the influence of pleasures and pains."² The second part has to do with the commencement of the animal life, with the stage in which the statue for the first time "can speak of self,"³ and with

¹ *Traité des sensations*, p. 11.

² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³ *Ibid.*, II, Ch. I, § 3.

the beginning of memory.¹ The third part relates to the judgments in regard to the external object. The fourth part shows "how we become capable of prevision and industry," "what our first judgments are concerning the goodness and beauty of things. In a word it is seen how man having been at first only a sentient animal becomes a reflective animal."²

The similarity of the works is still more striking when we consider the answers that are given to special questions. To take an important instance, the origin of the judgment of externality, for Maine de Biran, is found in the resistance which meets the active exercise of the sense of touch. Were it not for this sense no other forms of sensation could ever give us knowledge of the external world. Condillac had already given the same solution to the problem. The entire third part of the *Traité des sensations* describes "how touch teaches the other senses to judge of external objects." Chapter four of this part explains why we attribute to vision an independence of function which it does not in reality possess. We have seen that Maine de Biran made the judgment of externality depend upon active, not upon passive, touch. Condillac after maintaining that no knowledge of external objects can be derived from olfactory, auditory, gustatory, and visual sensations, says: "Just as certainly there would be the same ignorance with the sense of touch if it remained motionless."³ We have then the origin of the judgment of externality explained by the same fact, the activity of the organ of touch. The difference is in the introspective account of the psychical accompaniment of the act. With Maine de Biran it is an act of a self; with Condillac it is the movement of an organism.

This is a single instance. We find the same similarity and the same difference in the accounts given of other psychological phenomena. For example, the idea of self depends according to Condillac on the sense of touch. By this sense the statue becomes more than a mere modification of sensations. According to Maine de Biran, the idea of self depends upon the fact that our effort meets a

¹ *Op. cit.*, II, Ch. XI.

² *Ibid.*, p. 39.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

limit in the muscular sensation of our own body. The similarity is obvious. It is unnecessary to go into further detail to emphasize the close connection between Maine de Biran's philosophy and sensationalism. Each is a form of empiricism, a development of certain phases of Locke's system. Each is really a theory of knowledge which involves a realistic ontology. The great difference between Biran and Condillac is in the idea of self-activity, which is almost absent from the philosophy of the latter, while it is the leading idea in Biran's system. The supervention of the self, as an active principle, upon the phenomena of the "affective system" produces the phenomena of the "sensitive system," and it is the increasing influence of the active principle that explains the higher psychological facts. With Condillac, on the other hand, the problem is to show how the higher mental functions are built up out of pure sensations, without the intervention of any higher principle. Biran's work is in a certain sense a return from Condillac to Locke, but there is a difference between the treatment of self-activity in the philosophy of Biran and in that of Locke. With Locke reflection is merely one source of knowledge; with Biran effort is a constituent factor in all consciousness. In this respect Biran's position is an advance upon that of Condillac. But his work rather shows the difficulties in sensationalism than presents any self-consistent solution. His principle is subjective and psychological to the end. There is no satisfactory account of the universal and necessary character of the categories of thought. Biran's historical significance consists mainly in the personal influence which he exerted on Cousin.

SECTION XII.

ETHICS AND ÆSTHETICS.

At this point we shall briefly consider Maine de Biran's very fragmentary account of ethics and æsthetics. In connection with the third system described above, he gives a psychological basis for ethics. He speaks approvingly of the moral sense theory. Human actions and natural phenomena affect us very differently. Although the moralist can combine under a sign different elements which are not combined in nature ; the combinations thus formed to represent real or possible action are not arbitrary, for not all elements are equally compatible with each other. The factor which determines the compatibility of elements, and so the possibility of their connection, is the natural constitution of the moral sense. Combinations which affect the moral sense in a definite manner, or form the basis of the various classes of actions, arouse particular feelings of attraction or aversion, of love or hate. The qualities or actions which are suited to excite the same feelings in the mind must have a resemblance. It is this definite reaction of human nature which constitutes the unity of a class of actions. This is the source of the common character found in the general ideas of obligation, virtue, and vice. Despite the variety of elements, all the mixed modes admit of a certain kind of real unity.

The moral constitution of man, although variously modified, displays a common character in all individuals. But owing to the variety of feelings with which moral ideas are associated, it is hopeless to attempt a rigorous application of the mathematical method. There are, however, certain limits imposed by inner experience from which moral ideas can never escape.

In the lower systems, affection precedes judgment ; but the higher phenomena of the third system, *e. g.*, the consciousness of the beautiful, wonder, and admiration are consecutive to judgment. Surprise is an emotion that arises from a contrast between an earlier state of sensibility and a state which a new im-

pression tends to excite. It is strictly an emotion rather than a sentiment since it is anterior to all comparison. When surprise is very vivid fear results; when it only moderate wonder is produced. In the latter case, the subject tries to attribute the new factor to some natural cause. With success in this attempt there arises the agreeable feeling which attends the discovery of a new relation, with failure the wonder simply increases. Maine de Biran agrees that wonder is the source of science, since "it gives movement to the human mind . . . and ends by reducing to intelligence the laws which control the universe."¹ Admiration is not a kind of wonder (Descartes) through it may succeed surprise. The better we know what is great and beautiful in itself, the more we are struck with admiration. Wonder and admiration are essentially different from emotions, because they are much more closely related to ideas, yet they do not influence the ideas directly through belief. They have a certain constant character from the fact that they occur whenever attention is directed to particular relations of ideas. Emotions, on the other hand, presuppose anterior dispositions of sensibility without which they do not arise.²

Maine de Biran briefly traces the respective influence of the emotions and of the ideas with their related feelings on the conduct of the moral agent. The individual, who is determined by emotion, is bound to the attraction of the present pleasure; the individual, who is dominated by ideas, follows fixed lines of conduct. Attention can make an idea vivid enough to overcome the immediate impulses of sensation. Activity is thus the condition of moral preference. The guarantee of freedom is the fact that, while sensibility is limited, the power of the will is susceptible of indefinite increase. Freedom arises from the opposition which exists between the emotions and the higher feelings, and from the possibility of choice that results from that opposition.³

In the early part of the *Fondements de la morale et de la religion*, we have Maine de Biran's nearest approach to the formulation of an ethical system. A brief notice of this work will sup-

¹ *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. II, p. 211.

² *Cf. ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 212.

³ *Cf. ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 215-216.

plement his fragmentary treatment of the moral sentiments in the psychology.

The relations of man with man are founded on a sympathy which is contemporaneous with the very existence of the individual. They are distinct from the relations which man sustains to the rest of nature. In order to be moral, the sentient and intelligent being must attribute to other beings like himself, a self, a will, and feelings and rights similar to his own. The moral consciousness "so to speak sees itself in another as in an animate mirror."¹ In this moral consciousness, the personal affections are transformed into expansive feelings. At times Biran describes this transformation as the result of sympathy in the more affective sense. He says: "The strong measures his right by his strength; the weak submits to the law of necessity. But give to the strong a feeling of sympathy and love, and he will aid rather than oppress the weak, because the suffering and oppression of his weak fellow cause him suffering."² And again he says: "It is first in the family that the feelings of benevolence, protection, and sympathy arise and develop."³ At other times Biran gives a more rationalistic account of the relation of the individual and society. "What is right in the consciousness of the individual . . . becomes duty in the consciousness of the ethical person who attributes the same right to other persons."⁴ The principle of all virtuous action is in the need of approval from others, "that is, from the reason itself in which all participate equally."⁴ The principle of duty has nothing in common with modifications of individual sensibility, or with special relations of particular persons, but belongs to free beings in virtue of their participation "in that reason which illuminates all intelligences."

The variations in actual morality are recognized and are explained as due to failure in estimating the real significance of acts, or in finding the proper means of realizing ends. "There is at least a very general agreement in the manner of judging qualities which are truly worthy of esteem (those which tend to

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 33.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 36.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 48.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 37-38.

the perfection of the individual or the race)." ¹ " There is a common principle in the diverse acts which receive the general approbation of men." ² Morality seems relative because judgment is passed upon acts rather than upon motives.

Æsthetic ideas are closely related to moral ideas. Both classes emanate from the same active faculty of the mind ; and each class is related to certain feelings which determine it, and which it always excites. The imagination can never free itself entirely from the feeling elements on which it is established. There is, however, a lesser degree of universality in æsthetic than in moral ideas ; but in each case there is an absolute as well as a relative element. Beauty applies to totalities of perceptions, of images, or of intellectual ideas, which are combined in a certain order. But when we attempt to define the order more exactly we pass from general to particular ideas, and each person represents the order by the types or combinations which are most agreeable to him. Consequently there is great divergence of opinion in regard to what constitutes beauty.

The impressions which immediately affect the sensibility, such as odors, tastes, or tactual qualities, have nothing in common with the idea of the beautiful. They may be agreeable, but not beautiful. Relation with the active faculty of perception, judgment, or comparison is essential to constitute beauty. That is, a judgment is necessary to establish the feeling of the beautiful, while a simple tone or color may condition an agreeable feeling. Beauty requires a more or less extensive combination of perceptions and ideas. And a combination to be beautiful must not only be formed of perceptive elements, each of which is pleasant in itself, but there must be besides these elements a harmony, which relates or unites them, which represents to the mind a multiplicity under the form of unity. We do not know the principle in virtue of which perceptive elements form a unity. In the case of tones there is a basis for the principle in nature ; but we cannot tell why the tones, the stimuli of which stand in certain numerical relations, are beautiful. And we cannot carry over the laws of harmony from the auditory into the other systems of sensation.

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 41.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 42.

Certain groups of qualities appear to us naturally beautiful, other groups do not. The fact depends upon the nature of our constitution and the natural relations of our perceptive faculty with objects. We can discover the relations in experience, but cannot explain them *a priori*. The unity, symmetry, or order, depends on laws of perception and comparison. The combinations in which these laws are observed arouse in us the feeling of the beautiful. Nature does not always satisfy the demand thus set up; the result is an ideal of beauty.

There is in art a certain amount of comparison, abstraction, and combination; but the resemblances, which determine the class of objects that the understanding unites under the same sign, differ essentially from the analogies, to which the imagination refers in satisfying the needs of the æsthetic sensibility. All the qualities which tend to excite in the mind the same feeling have the resemblance which is necessary to constitute them into a single class. In the beautiful we have a combination of means converging towards a single end.

Each art has its specific and limited domain. Painting and sculpture reach the mind by means of colors, forms, or positions. There can be only one time of action, a single situation. Their effect is consequently immediate. Music influences the mind without having recourse to images, it sets up a play of imagination which may be of indefinite duration. As our vivid feelings are developed in time, music will always have a higher value than painting and sculpture. Poetry also realizes its combinations in time.

We cannot reduce the principle of art to imitation of nature. The feelings which art arouses are inherent in human nature. Artists discover relations between these feelings and apply to them combinations of elements modeled by the imagination. It is true that some elements are derived by imitation, but the power of the artist rests in the beauty of expression, not in that of imitation. Any form of imitation carries with it the idea of limit. Art, on the other hand, turns our view toward the infinite. It makes us feel what cannot be shown in sense or represented in imagination.¹

¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 198-199.

The relation of the absolute to the relative element in art is determined in the same manner as the relation of ideas of reflection to general ideas. Relative beauty corresponds to resemblances inherent in the nature of the combined ideas, and consequently is variable. Absolute beauty refers to the forms which constitute the unity of the combination of ideas. Artistic good taste is merely the feeling of order and harmony which looks for unity in the variety of modifications. Taste is wanting, where the unity is neglected and attention is directed only to the variety and detail of sensations, *e. g.*, in the Gothic architecture, where the grandeur of the whole is sacrificed to superficial ornament, and in painting where truth of design is sacrificed to richness of color.

It is possible to accustom ourselves to combinations of sensible qualities, which lack unity, until we derive pleasure from them. An object which is not beautiful may please by association of ideas; and conversely, an object which is beautiful may not please because it is related by the imagination to some painful idea. But the rules of beauty, though they may be forgotten or unknown, are not the less eternal and invariable. Thus the external senses and the imagination are not the final judges of real beauty. The great artist by reflection and profound study finds the sources of beauty beyond the sphere of sensation in the fixed relations and proportions of parts with each other and with a unity. When he has seized the form in the abstract, he individualizes it by combinations of colors and figures which are directed to sense. The individual picture, however, possesses a real beauty which the senses alone cannot apprehend. The final product is a unity through the artist's creative imagination, not through the artificial aggregation of parts naturally dissociated. The genius can appreciate intellectual beauty, apart from any sensible manifestation, in a unity constructed by the scientific imagination, *e. g.*, in the Copernican view of the solar system. Thus a real unity of idea lies at the base of all artistic conceptions.¹

¹ *Cf. op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 204-206.

SECTION XIII.

RELIGION.

Before concluding our account of Maine de Biran's philosophy, we must notice the characteristics of his later development, as they are embodied in the *Anthropologie*, and in the *Fondaments de la morale et de la religion*. As already stated, Naville in his general introduction to the works of Biran distinguishes a third stage after the year 1818. But this distinction, as well as his separation of the first and second periods, seems somewhat arbitrary. It is true that questions are taken up in the later work which are not treated in the psychology. There is an increasing emphasis placed on man's wider relations to society and the world. But this is not a development of Biran's philosophy to another stage; it is rather a consideration of problems that were neglected in the psychology. The fact that his principle of self-activity does not adequately explain the ethical and religious phases of human experience is not sufficient reason for considering Biran's later work as a new stage. The truth is that his ethics and especially his philosophy of religion is incompletely and unsatisfactorily worked out. In the *Anthropologie* there is a comparison of the values of Christianity and of Stoicism. Ethics as a system of human conduct is not worked out in detail in this place. The treatment of religion is confined to the third part of the *Anthropologie*, the *Vie de l'esprit*, while the first and second parts, the *Vie animale* and the *Vie humaine*, are less detailed restatements of the position presented in the *Psychologie*.

After a somewhat minute examination of the last-named work, it will be unnecessary to go into an elaborate exposition of the *Anthropologie*. The first and second parts especially may be passed over, since we have considered them in our study of the nature of effort. Consequently we shall limit the treatment to a notice of some of the principal points of the third part.

The essential feature of the *Vie de l'esprit* is the consideration

of a third form of life, higher than the animal life or the active life of man, that is, a life "which is entirely spiritual."¹ Man stands intermediate between God and nature. In virtue of this position he possesses freedom in his activity. At a lower stage the personality of the soul is annihilated in animal life, at a higher stage it is lost in God. "Perhaps man holds in the scale of spirits the rank that the coral holds among sentient beings,"² but man is endowed with an activity by which he can rise in the scale. The second life is given to man as a means to the third, in which he is free from the bondage of the affections and passions. Christianity alone reveals to man this third life above human sensibility, reason, or will. Stoicism did not get beyond the second life and exaggerated the power of the will and of reason over the passions and affections of the sensitive life. But there is something more to be explained, that is, "the absorption of the reason and the will in a supreme force, an absorption which without effort establishes a state of perfection and happiness."³ "This is the mystical life of enthusiasm, the highest degree to which the soul can attain in identifying itself with its supreme object."⁴ The necessity of the second life, as a means to the realization of the third, is emphasized. The absorption is described as "calm" succeeding "storms," and as "repose of the soul after and not before effort."⁵ But, on the other hand, it is not absolutely in the power of the soul to pass from an inferior to a superior stage. The individual "needs a support beyond himself. Religion comes to his aid."⁶

The work of the year 1818, *De la morale et de la religion*, gives a proof for the existence of God. "The principle of causality is in us, and by establishing this principle in its source and applying it with a sane reason, we can rise from the personality of the self, which is a relative and particular cause effecting bodily movement, to the personality of God, which is the absolute and

¹ *Œuvres inédites*, Vol. III, p. 517.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 517.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 520.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 521.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 525.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 531.

universal cause of the order of the world and of his own existence." ¹ Religion, for Maine de Biran, depends upon morality for its content in the sense that while morality is independent of religion, the latter "presupposes a moral sentiment or relation of sympathy and love between sentient feeble beings and the supreme cause on which they depend for their modifications and even for their existence." ²

A review of the main facts of this section shows clearly that the idea of will is involved throughout the philosophy of religion, and thus invalidates a complete separation between Biran's second and third periods. The life of activity is a necessary means to the religious life. The proof for the existence of God is based directly on will. The personality of God is thought after the analogy of the personality of the self. And finally in the last quotation, the third, or religious, form of life is explicitly made dependent upon morality. The element of mysticism which does appear in Biran's latter writings is not made a leading principle of explanation. It is, however, an important supplement to the idea of activity in the account of social and religious phenomena.

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 52.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 48.

SECTION XIV.

BIRAN'S RELATION TO SUBSEQUENT THINKERS : COUSIN, COMTE, RENOUVIER, AND FOUILLÉE.

In conclusion it seems fitting to consider very briefly the place that Biran holds in the subsequent philosophy of his country. It would, however, be impossible within the present limits to make an exhaustive study of his influence upon later writers. Consequently this section will be devoted to a consideration of his relation to a few of the typical leaders of thought during the last century. And in this way a general view of his historical position may be gained.

Maine de Biran is more closely related to Cousin than to any other subsequent philosopher. Biran's work, however, is only one of the many sources from which the head of the eclectic philosophy drew in constructing his system. And in this, as in other instances, Cousin did not borrow uncritically from an earlier thinker ; but aimed to found his work upon observation of facts and induction. We are very fortunate in regard to our knowledge of the relation between Biran and Cousin. The latter has left us a very careful criticism of Biran's doctrine of the direct perception of the self through experiences of will or effort. Cousin's criticism is all the more valuable because there is no circumstance which could have induced him to accentuate the differences between his own position and that of Biran. Not only were the philosophers compatriots, but the finest personal relation subsisted between the elder and the younger man. Further, the strenuous advocacy of the freedom of the will would tend to draw them closer together. Finally, Cousin was the first to edit the works of Biran and thus to introduce him to the philosophical world. The consideration of these facts lends a peculiar interest to the criticism.

Cousin finds that Biran was right in emphasizing personality and in showing the identity between will and attention. More-

over, the account of the origin of the idea of causality is correct. But Biran was wrong in attempting to identify the will with personality. The greatest error, however, was in neglecting the distinction between the idea of causality and the principle of causality. The former is developed in experience, while the latter is a truth to which reason is naturally subject.

Cousin's estimate of Biran's theory of will is most carefully worked out in connection with an examination of Locke's idea of power. In this connection Cousin shows the intimate relation between Locke and Biran. As the empirical character of Biran's philosophy has been one of the main theses which we have tried to present, we have a double reason for looking at Cousin's work : first, because it substantiates our general position, and secondly, because it shows the exact relation between Biran and eclecticism. Cousin's view of Biran's philosophy of will as well as his statement of its defects is brought out clearly in the following quotations : "The distinguishing merit of M. de Biran is in having established that the will is the constituent characteristic of our personality. He has gone farther — too far, perhaps. As Locke confounded consciousness and memory with personality and identity of self, M. de Biran has gone even so far as to confound the will with personality itself. It is certainly the eminent characteristic of it, so that the idea of cause, which is given in the consciousness of the productive will, is for that reason given in the consciousness of our personality."¹

"In short, this cause, which is ourselves, is implied in every fact of consciousness. The necessary condition of every phenomenon perceived by consciousness is that we pay attention to it. If we do not bestow our attention, the phenomenon may perhaps still exist, but the consciousness not connecting itself with it, and not taking knowledge of it, it is for us a non-existence. Attention then is the condition of every appreciation of consciousness. Now attention, as I have more than once shown, is the will. The condition, then, of every phenomenon of consciousness, and of course of the first phenomenon, as of all others, is the will, and as the will is the causative power, it follows that in the first fact

¹ *Elements of Psychology* (trans. 4th ed. by C. S. Henry), p. 183.

of consciousness, and in order that this fact may take place, there must necessarily be the apperception of our own causality in the will, from whence it follows again that the idea of cause is the primary idea; that the apperception of the voluntary cause which we ourselves are is the first of all apperceptions, and the condition of all others.

"Such is the theory to which M. de Biran has raised that of Locke. I adopt it. I believe that it perfectly accounts for the idea of cause. But it remains to inquire whether the idea of cause . . . suffices . . . to explain the principle of causality. For Locke, who treats of the idea of cause, but never of the principle of causality, the problem did not even exist. M. de Biran, who scarcely proposes it, resolves it by far too rapidly, and arrives at once at a result, the only one permitted by Locke's theory and by his own, but which sound psychology and sound logic cannot accept.

"According to M. de Biran, after we have derived the idea of cause from the sentiment of our own personal activity, in the phenomenon of effort, of which we are conscious, we transfer this idea outwardly; we project it into the external world, by virtue of an operation which, with Royer-Collard, he has called *natural induction*."¹ But this view is unsatisfactory, because "The peculiar character of induction . . . is . . . in the contrast of the identity of the phenomenon or of the law, and of the diversity of the circumstances from which it is first derived and then transferred. If, then, the knowledge of external causes is only an induction from our personal cause, it is in strictness our causality, the voluntary and free cause which ourselves constitute, that should be transferred by induction into the external world. . . . From whence it follows that it is our own causality we should be obliged to suppose wherever a phenomenon begins to appear: that is to say, all the causes which we subsequently conceive are and can be nothing but our own personality."²

This thought is developed still further to show the insufficiency of Biran's treatment of the principle of causality. "The

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 183-184.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 185-186.

belief in the external world and in external causes is universal and necessary; and the fact which explains it ought itself to be universal and necessary; if therefore our belief in the world and in external causes resolves itself into the assimilation of these causes to ours, this assimilation ought likewise to be universal and necessary. Now at this point I have recourse to psychology. . . . We all have a perfect conviction that the world exists, that there are external causes. These causes we believe to be neither personal, nor intentional, nor voluntary. . . . But if this belief is universal and necessary, the judgment which includes it and gives it ought to have a principle which is itself universal and necessary: and this principle is nothing else than the principle of causality. . . . Take away the principle of causality, and whenever a phenomenon appeared upon the theater of consciousness, of which we were not the cause, there would no longer be a ground for our demanding a cause for the phenomenon. . . . But on the contrary, assume the principle of causality (as potentially existing in the mind), and as soon as the phenomenon of sensation begins to appear on the theater of consciousness, at the same instant the principle of causality (actually unfolded and put in exercise by the occasion of the phenomenon), marks it with this character that it cannot but have a cause. Now as consciousness attests that this cause is not ourselves, and yet it remains not less certain that it must have a cause, it follows that there is a cause *other* than ourselves, and which is neither personal nor voluntary, and yet it is a cause, that is to say, a cause simply efficient."¹

Cousin finds a certain partial truth in Biran's account of will but regards that account as inadequate. He says: "I admit, I am decidedly of the opinion that the consciousness of our own proper causality precedes any conception of the principle of causality, and of course precedes any application of that principle, any knowledge of external causality."² Genetically the knowledge of causality is discovered by an act of will. But the principle of causality is made logically prior to the particular

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 187-189.

² *Ibid.*, p. 190.

example of the principle in voluntary activity. Cousin works out the distinction as follows: "The process by which in the depths of the mind the passage is made from the primary fact of consciousness to the ulterior fact of the conception of the principle is this. I wish to move my arm and I move it. . . . This fact, when analyzed, gives three elements: (1) Consciousness of a volition which is my own, which is personal; (2) a motion produced; (3) and finally, a reference of this motion to my will . . . a relation of production, of causation; a relation too, which I no more call in question, than I do either of the other two terms, and without which the other two terms are not given; so that the three terms are given in one single and indivisible fact, which fact is the consciousness of my personal causality. . . .

"This fact . . . is characterized by being particular, individual, determinate. . . . Again, it is characteristic of everything particular and determinate, to be susceptible of the degrees of more or less. I myself, a voluntary cause, have at such a moment more or less energy, which makes the motion produced by me have more or less force. But does the feeblest motion pertain any less to me than the most energetic? Is there between the cause, myself, and the effect, motion, a less relation in the one case than in the other? Not at all, the two terms may vary, and do vary perpetually in intensity, but the relation does not vary. Still further, the two terms . . . may even not exist at all. . . . But the relation between these two determinate, variable, and contingent terms, is neither variable nor contingent. It is universal and necessary. The moment the consciousness seizes these two terms, the reason seizes their relation, and by an immediate abstraction which needs not the support of a great number of similar facts, it disengages the invariable and necessary element of the fact from its variable and contingent elements. . . . Reason, then, is subject to this truth, it is under an impossibility of not supposing a cause, whenever the senses or the consciousness reveal any motion or phenomenon. Now this impossibility, to which the reason is subjected, of not supposing a cause for every phenomenon, . . . is what we call the principle of causality. . . . Now it is with the principle of causality as

with other principles ; never would the human mind have conceived it in its universality and necessity, if at first there had not been given us a particular fact of causation ; and this primitive and particular fact is that of our own proper and personal causality, manifested to the consciousness in an effort, in a voluntary act. But this does not suffice of itself wholly to explain the knowledge of external causes, because we should have to regard external causes as only an induction from our own causality."¹

The extended quotations already given and the importance of the subject alike require that we should look at the passage in which Cousin sums up his criticism of Biran. It is as follows : " Gifted with extraordinary psychological insight, M. de Biran penetrated so far into the intimacy of the fact of consciousness by which the first idea of cause is given, that he scarcely disengaged himself from that fact and that idea, and neglected too much the principle of causality ; thus confounding, as Locke has done, the antecedent of a principle with the principle itself ; or when he attempted to explain the principle of causality, he explained it by a *natural induction* which transfers to the external world consciousness, the will and all the peculiar attributes of his model ; confounding in this way a particular, transient, and erroneous application of the principle of causality, with the principle in itself. . . . The theory of M. de Biran is the development of the theory of Locke. It reproduces that theory with more extent and profoundness, and exhausts at once both its merits and its defects."¹

While the question of the relation of Cousin to Biran is logically distinct from the question concerning Cousin's estimate of his debt to his predecessor, I believe they are practically coincident. If this is correct, in the view that the idea of causality becomes explicit in the fact of volition, that is, that it is genetically (though not logically) derived from the act of will, we have the important thought which Cousin accepted from Biran's theory of will. Taking causality as a typical example, it may be said that while Biran derives the intellectual categories from a psy-

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 190-194.

² *Ibid.*, p. 197.

chological fact, Cousin makes them universal laws of reason. A general view of Cousin's treatment of causality suggests the conclusion that Biran's influence on early eclecticism has been over-emphasized.

Passing from the system which stands in closest relation to Biran's work to that which is most antithetical, positivism, we can dismiss our subject much more briefly. We have here no extended criticism for examination, and need only note the divergence in method and in general attitude to philosophical questions. We have, then, not so much to trace a relation as to show the absence of any intimate relation between Biran and Comte. Biran, we have seen, was individualistic in attitude and pursued a psychological method. Comte, on the other hand, was socialistic in attitude and employed a method which was derived from and suited to include the other sciences, but which left no place for psychology in Biran's sense of that term. It is unnecessary to carry the comparison further. The contrasted positions will be shown by a notice of Comte's views on some questions which we have seen were important for Biran.

With Comte any attempt to seek for a metaphysical basis from which the postulates of the various sciences could be deduced marked a return to a more primitive method of thought. He could consequently have no sympathy with a system like that of Biran which was founded on an ultimate fact discovered in experience. For positivism science is its own end; and any law of the relation of the sciences must be discovered in the history of scientific development rather than in some isolated fact. Starting with this view of "the powerlessness of metaphysical methods for the study of moral and intellectual phenomena," Comte notes the general "absurdity of the supposition of a man seeing himself think." He then finds further difficulties in the method of "*interior observation*." "It is at once evident that no function can be studied but with relation to the organ that fulfils it, or to the phenomena of its fulfilment: and in the second place, that the affective functions, and yet more the intellectual, exhibit in the latter respect this particular characteristic — that they cannot be observed during their operation, but only in their

results, more or less immediate and more or less durable." The psychological method does not study the organic conditions nor the intellectual acts, and thus by neglecting "both the agent and the act," it is lost in "an unintelligible conflict of words, in which merely nominal entities are substituted for real phenomena." We have seen that Biran also often speaks against the substitution of abstractions for realities, and it is necessary to see clearly what is meant. Biran's ultimate reality, the self discovered in effort, is for Comte merely a "nominal entity," while agent is made equivalent to "organic condition."

Comte objects further to the "radical separation which it was thought necessary to make between brutes and man" and "the necessity that the metaphysicians found themselves under, of preserving the unity of what they call the I, that it might correspond with the unity of the *soul*." For "it is probable that among the superior animals the sense of personality is still more marked than in man, on account of their more isolated life."¹

It might seem to the casual observer that there is one resemblance between the systems, in the fact that positivism makes the affective, prior to the intellectual, life. But even this point of similarity is not valid, because Biran sharply distinguishes will and desire. We may say then that Biran had no influence on positivism.

Having considered Maine de Biran's relation to eclecticism and to positivism, we shall conclude by noting the estimate in which he is held by contemporary writers. First, let us see how he fits into Renouvier's historical scheme. The neo-critic thinks that both eclecticism and positivism were inadequate reactions against the philosophy of the eighteenth century. The former sought to rediscover the "lofty philosophical traditions" of the seventeenth century, the latter aimed at their "total abandonment confident of replacing them by a more certain method." But neither was alive to "the necessity of studying the nature of the principles of knowledge."²

Biran was a true child of his time. Although he passed with

¹ Martineau, *Comte's Positive Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 331, 334.

² *Histoire et solution des problèmes métaphysiques*, pp. 415-417.

the eclectics as the discoverer of Leibnitz, he really emphasized only the principle of activity, while he did not even understand the doctrine of preëstablished harmony.¹ Still retaining his realistic position, he made the will a force of our own "of which we have at the same time thought and external perception with the certitude of its action, as a cause producing organic movement."²

It is easy to see how slight Biran's influence has been on neo-criticism. Both Biran and Renouvier are strenuous advocates of free will. But for the former it is a fact given in experience, which we cannot doubt any more than we can doubt the existence of the self. Renouvier, on the other hand, "rests the thesis of free will, not with the eclectics on the vain affirmation of an inner experience which we have of it, a confusion between the real experience of our feeling on this point and the experience which it is necessary we should have and which we never do have of the relation of this feeling with the truth," but on a psychological analysis of the act of deliberation, on the evident fallacy in employing the principle of contradiction to prove that all future events are determined, and on a study of the concept of cause.³ We are forced to conclude that Biran had very little direct influence on the work of Renouvier.

We will consider one more estimate of Biran, made by another contemporary writer on will philosophy. Fouillée speaks of Biran as the one who reëstablished dynamism in man and nature "but under the doubtful form of motor force" and who "had only a very mystical idea" of "the sphere of ideal freedom." He says: "much of French philosophy agrees with Maine de Biran and with German philosophy in supposing that beyond logical mechanism and sensible reality there is a region of freedom which is at the same time a region of love understood in the true sense."⁴

It is clear, however, that Fouillée does not accept the theory of a "true motor force," as Biran employed the term, for he criticises an error of the "partisans of the objectivity of the self."

¹ *Cf. op. cit.*, p. 414.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 456-457.

³ *Cf. ibid.*, pp. 437-438.

⁴ *La liberté et le déterminisme*, p. 341.

They confuse the two meanings of the "idea of the self" which can stand for either "the reflective idea of the self" which "is only a distinct manifestation of our thought, and contrasted with our existence" or "the immediate consciousness of being, of sensation, and of thought."¹ Fouillée finds that "the most that can be accorded to man, is simply a vague consciousness of force or universal will which acts in us as in others, this pretended consciousness of the universal is without doubt only a pure idea." "If we thus have consciousness of any freedom, it is not of *our* individual freedom, but of *freedom* of absolute unity superior to our own individuality. In this case I am free precisely where I am no longer *self*. While as a *self*, as a being distinct and determinate, I am determined both in my action and in my existence, I am caught in the net of universal determinism."²

When we compare this quotation with Biran's idea of freedom, we cannot claim that Fouillée with his doctrine of the "force of the idea of freedom" as a means of reconciliation between liberty and determinism, really owes any considerable debt to the earlier philosopher.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 77.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

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CORNELL STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

No. 6

THE PHILOSOPHY OF F. H. JACOBI

BY

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New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1905



Press of
The New Era Printing Company
LANCASTER, PA.

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CHAPTER I.

LIFE AND WRITINGS.

Jacobi lived in one of the most stirring political and literary periods of German history, and in the most important period of modern philosophy. He lived through the era of the French Revolution and of the Napoleonic Wars, and was a contemporary of Goethe, Schiller, and Lessing in literature, and of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel in philosophy. In addition to the contemporary influences which these names represent, the effects of earlier movements were still manifest in many ways. The religious influence of the Reformation was continued in Pietism, under the shadow of which he passed his earlier years. This early training gave a decidedly religious tone to his life, and to all his philosophical work.

It is probable, too, that this movement had much to do with the general reaction against the rigid rationalism of the *Aufklärung*, which set in when Jacobi was a young man. This tendency found its clearest expression in Hamann's *Gefühlsphilosophie*. It was undoubtedly this movement which led Jacobi to extend sympathy and help to the new Romanticism, with its simpler and healthier views of the world and of human life. Never before had literary and historical criticism assumed such importance; for it was largely through these, in the first instance, that the strength of Romanticism was expressed. Mysticism, too, was still alive and an active force in society, and especially in religion. Jacob Boehme, indeed, had given it some standing in philosophy, and it was now destined to have a much larger place. This was due to the fact that it had passed beyond the stage of physical excitation, and of a mere rule of life, such as it was in Eckhart and Tauler and to some extent in Boehme, and had adopted a rationalistic procedure. An *intellectuelle Anschauung* had taken the place of the earlier emotional intuition; and this had raised mysticism from the position of a mere individualistic rule of life to that of a philosophical doctrine or universal principle. This Jacobi eventually developed further than any of his predecessors.

*His Life.*¹ Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi was born at Düsseldorf on

¹ The account of Jacobi's life is taken chiefly from Zirngiehl, *Jacobi's Leben, Dichten und Denken* (Vienna, 1867), from Adamson's article "Jacobi" in the

the 25th of January, 1743. He was the second son of a wealthy merchant, who was engaged in the sugar industry. His father was a strong Protestant, and the boy was brought up in that faith. Jacobi seems to have possessed from early youth a deep religious sense and a certain mystical tendency. Referring to himself as the author of *Allwill*, he says: "Therefore, already as a youth, the man was a visionary, a phantast, a mystic."¹ In a similar connection, he refers to Pietism, and acknowledges its influence upon him.² It is related of him that, as a boy, instead of playing with other boys, he would often stay in the house and converse with a pious old maid-servant of the family. As a mere child he thus showed an interest in religion, and even in the solution of certain religious problems. At the age of eight or nine he had intuitive views of immortality which ever remained with him.³ In *Allwill* he tells of an experience of rapture, a sort of mystical experience, which he had in early life.⁴ His faculty of intuition was thus very strong. He says that in early life he could not realize the existence of anything he could not intuit, or place before his senses in imagination. This reminds one of Berkeley, who could not realize the actuality of anything which he could not individualize.⁵

Jacobi's father intended him to follow a commercial career, and with this end in view sent him, at the age of sixteen, to Geneva, to complete his studies. Here he remained four years. He had spent his early life under the influence of religion (Pietism), but at Geneva he first came in contact with philosophy. Sensationalism was the dominant philosophy there at that time, and he first approached the subject from that side. This led him to see an opposition between philosophy (or science) and faith, which he never afterward could reconcile. It became the business of his whole later life to try to adjust, though not to reconcile, their respective spheres.⁶ The influence of the empirical school was, however, negative. He grasped the enthusiasm rather than the theories of its adherents, and was most moved by that which was illogical in them, but which he felt was most true to the realities of life. His teachers here were Bonnet and Le Sage; and he also read Rousseau, Voltaire, and others. But neither the scepticism of Voltaire nor the sentimental deism of *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and from Hedge, *Prose Writers of Germany* (Philadelphia, 1870).

¹ Jacobi, *Werke*, I, p. xii.

² I, p. 33.

³ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

⁴ I, p. 24.

⁵ Cf. Fraser, *Selections from Berkeley*, p. 3.

⁶ Pünjer, *History of the Christian Philosophy of Religion*, Eng. trans., p. 621.

Rousseau appealed much to him. He was driven rather to seek a philosophy which should not only acknowledge God and things divine—supersensible truth—but one which should also have a place for a God and a faith, as living, ever-present, realities in life.

After finishing his course at Geneva, he married, in 1764, Betty von Clermont, a lady of Aix-la-Chapelle, who was very beautiful and accomplished. In addition to "her great personal and mental attractions," she brought him considerable wealth. She seems to have been an excellent woman, highly esteemed by all who knew her. Goethe, in his *Memoirs*, speaks of her in terms of praise.

Jacobi now took his place at the head of the mercantile house which was handed over to him by his father. But this did not prove congenial to him, as he had no taste for business. He therefore soon betook himself to literary and philosophical work, which was better suited to his meditative disposition. He accepted, however, an election to membership in the Council of Juliers and Berg, in which connection he became famous for his financial ability and his zeal in social reform. His interest in social and political questions is shown by his writings on these subjects, which constitute the sixth volume of his collected works.

Jacobi and Wieland founded a new literary journal, *Der Merkur*, in which were published some of his earliest writings, including, among other things, his *Allwills Briefsammlung* in 1774. In 1779 he published *Woldemar*, a philosophical novel of no great merit, though interesting as a statement of his earliest views, and as an illustration of his philosophical method. His temperament, as seen in these early works, is literary rather than philosophical; he is satisfied with reaching truth by a sort of intuition, and does not seem to demand a complete rationalization of principles. He was familiar, however, with philosophy, past and present, and saw as well as anyone the short-comings of the current speculations, though at this time he could offer no deep philosophical contribution. He saw that life was larger than the current philosophy could provide for, and that theory had not attained to the fulness of faith.¹ Without critical examination, then, he took the principle of faith, which he saw had so large a place in religion and in life, and tried to give it the dignity of a philosophical principle; though in his later years he examined it more carefully, and substituted an intellectual element for the feeling element which characterized his first presentation of the subject.

In the same year (1779) in which he published *Woldemar*, he became a member of the privy council at Munich. He proved

¹ Cf. Lotze, who said that life was larger than logic.

energetic; "but the exposure of the abuses of the Bavarian system of customs was attended with consequences which rendered that post uncomfortable."¹ He therefore returned to Pempelfort, where he applied himself with exclusive devotion to literature. The death of his wife broke in upon the peacefulness of his labors, and threw a gloom over his remaining years. He kept up his home at Pempelfort, however, and during the next few years produced some of his most important writings, among which was his *Briefe über die Lehre Spinozas*, 1785, in letters to Moses Mendelssohn. This first brought him into relation with contemporary philosophy, as it was his first truly philosophical work. It was called forth by a conversation with Lessing, in which the latter declared that he knew of no philosophy which could properly be called such, except Spinoza's. This led Jacobi to make an extended and careful study of Spinoza, which resulted in the work above mentioned. This celebrated conversation has been preserved for us by Jacobi.²

In 1789 Jacobi published a second edition of his work on Spinoza, greatly enlarged, and with added appendixes. In this we find the first clear statement of his opposition to a philosophy of demonstration, as distinguished from a philosophy of faith, which he avowed. He thus identified himself with the *Gefühlsphilosophie* of Hamann and Herder. This put him at once in opposition to the leading philosophers of the time, including Mendelssohn, who was looked up to as chief. These all misunderstood him, and thought he was trying to reintroduce into philosophy the antiquated notion of unreasoning belief. They called him an enemy of reason, a Pietist, and even a Jesuit in disguise. So careless was their examination of his writings that they thought he advocated a doctrine of unreasoning faith and dogmatic authority.

In reply to this charge he published a dialogue entitled *David Hume über den Glauben, oder Idealismus und Realismus*. In the preface he protested against being regarded as an advocate of a blind faith, and as an enemy of science and philosophy.³ He endeavored also to vindicate his use of the words 'faith' and 'belief,' by showing that these terms had been used by eminent writers, especially by David Hume, in the sense in which he himself was now using them, and that there were no other words to express the immediate cognition of facts, as opposed to the construction of inferences. In an appendix to the second edition of this work, he first expressed himself on

¹ Hedge, *Prose Writers of Germany*, p. 206.

² IV, a, pp. 53 ff. For an English translation of the conversation, see Sime. Lessing, Vol. II, pp. 300 ff.

³ II, p. 4.

Kantianism, and showed his intense keenness of criticism. He here set forth his realism in opposition to the Kantian philosophy, which he interpreted as subjective idealism.

At the outbreak of the war with France, which followed close upon the French Revolution, Jacobi left Düsseldorf, and lived for nearly two years in Holstein, the native province of his father. While there he made the acquaintance of Reinhold; and from there he published, in 1801, his first important work on Kantianism, *Ueber das Unternehmen des Kriticismus die Vernunft zu Verstande zu bringen*. In this he developed more fully than in the appendix to *David Hume* his position with reference to what he thought to be the subjective idealism of the Kantian system.

It was while living here that he was accused of atheism at Jena, probably on account of his partial acceptance of Kant's Dialectic. In order, then, to set himself and his philosophy in the proper light with reference to theology, he published an apologetic letter, *Jacobi an Fichte*, in which he tried to define his position with precision. Nothing was further from him than atheism. Instead of being its supporter and defender, he was its most determined opponent. All his efforts were directed to establish theism; and the principal charge he made against Spinozism was that it was atheistic and fatalistic.

Soon after returning to his home at Düsseldorf, he received a call in 1804 to the new Academy of Science just founded at Munich; and as he had lost part of his paternal fortune through a brother-in-law, he was induced to accept the position. In 1807 he was made president of the Academy, and remained in that position for four years. While there he published his last philosophical work, *Von göttlichen Dingen*, which he directed chiefly against Schelling. The latter made a bitter reply, which Jacobi never noticed, though the controversy was carried on by others, chiefly Fries and Baader.

In 1812 he retired from the presidency, and began to prepare a collected edition of his works, but died, March 10, 1819, before he had completed the task. The work was continued, however, by Köppen, and was completed in 1825. It was published in six volumes, the fourth volume containing three parts. The second volume contains an Introduction by Jacobi which is at the same time the best introduction to his philosophy, and the most succinct and lucid statement he ever made of his general position. It is to this edition of his works that all references are made in this monograph.¹

Jacobi was not a philosopher of set purpose. His first writings

¹ The paging of the *Vorrede* of the 1812 edition varies in different copies, though the body of the works is the same.

contained merely an implicit philosophy of life, and it was only later that he was driven to an endeavor to render that philosophy explicit. He was a busy man of affairs for many years, and his writings were but occasional treatises,—“written rhapsodically and at grasshopper gait,” as he says, and, for the most part, in the form of letters, dialogues, and romances. “It was never my object,” he says, “to construct a system for the schools; my writings sprang from my innermost life, they followed an historical course; in a certain way I was not the author of them, not with my own will so, but under compulsion of a higher and irresistible power.”¹ His philosophy, more than that of almost any other philosopher, was primarily his personal view of life, and only secondarily did it become a system of principles.

Jacobi seems to have been a man of most admirable personal qualities. He had very deep social feelings, as is evidenced by the fact that he made his mansion at Pempelfort a resort for literary men. He was also intensely religious, though there seems to be no evidence that he interested himself very greatly in any contemporary ecclesiastical affairs. Love for God and man went together in him, and were the united cause of all his philosophical thought.

We shall endeavor to trace very briefly the influences which met in him, and which went to shape his character, and to give content and form to his philosophy.

Pietism. The deep religious movements of Germany have nearly all been associated with, or have been the outcome of, some form of mysticism. There were mystics such as Tauler and Eckhart before the Reformation, from whom the chief inspiration of that movement came. Luther himself was a mystic, and drew much inspiration from Staupitz. Then came Boehme, one of the most profound thinkers ever found in the ranks of the common people. His mysticism was broad and deep, and he was sufficiently philosophical to give some real character to his thought. The movement of which the Pietism of Jacobi's day was the product was begun by Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705), and was at first a movement within the Lutheran Church. It took the form of a protest against the formalism which had been developed within the Church, and which threatened to destroy its real spirit. Its chief characteristics, therefore, were deep spirituality, an emphasis upon experience rather than knowledge, upon immediate intuition rather than mediate thought, and upon the importance of the individual.

¹ Quoted by Schwegler, *History of Philosophy*, Eng. trans. by Stirling, p. 249.

² Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-2.

It was therefore "rather a religious mood than a form of thought."¹

Spener also placed much emphasis upon conversion, or the renewal of the natural man by the spiritual.² This naturally meant an antagonism between the natural and the spiritual,—an antagonism which Jacobi inherited and which always remained a very marked feature of his view of the world. In the same way, the other features of Pietism, and of mysticism generally, entered deeply into his thought. To the end he remained strongly individualistic or empirical, valuing direct and immediate intuitions above the richest content of mediated thought, and was never able to overcome the opposition between the natural and the spiritual man, or between nature and mind. This will be seen in his permanent dualism between knowledge of mechanical nature (or science) and knowledge of the supersensible or spiritual world, which he chose to call philosophy.

Such a view of the world of nature and man undoubtedly complicates the philosophical problem, but it is nevertheless the basis of all true spiritual or religious life. It was the source of the truest and deepest life of the church, and furnished the only true experiential basis of the doctrinal aspect of Christianity. This cannot precede, but must follow upon true religious life, and it was from this sort of life that the doctrines of the Reformation historically sprang,—those doctrines which mark the spiritual emancipation of our modern world. Under these influences Jacobi spent the earlier years of his life, and it was from these that he drew his conception of the world and of life.

Sensationalism. This was the first philosophy which Jacobi read at all carefully. Previous to his term at Geneva he had read but little,—only what the ordinary school-boy reads. But at Geneva he came in touch with French Sensationalism, through the *Encyclopædia*, which at that time had its stronghold there.³ Then began his serious study of philosophy. Le Sage was his teacher, and Jacobi says that his acquaintance with him marks an epoch in his life, and that his year with him was the most fruitful he ever spent.⁴

It was a strange contrast,—a Pietist in the midst of the materialistic movement of the time,⁵ and one of the most thoroughgoing materialistic movements in the entire history of philosophy. Jacobi was thus led into very serious mental and spiritual struggles, and it

¹ Wilde, F. H. *Jacobi: A Study in the Origin of German Realism*, p. 11.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

³ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

⁴ *II*, pp. 182-3.

⁵ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

is probably due to the fact of being thrown on his own spiritual resources that he had his "fruitful year." He was forced to a more careful and positive study of the spirit than ever before,¹ or than was at all usual with young men of his years. He studied Le Sage, Bonnet, Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot, and Durand; though he seems to have been most in sympathy with Rousseau.² The others furnished him little positive material for his own thought. He seems to have been satisfied with their general philosophical method; for it is only their results which he criticises, and this only when they come into the sphere of the supersensible. He seems never to have called in question the validity of their method in the sphere of what we now call the science of nature. In this field, however, he never showed any interest,—the things of the spirit were his only attraction. The method of this school he accepted as the only method for exact science; and as the whole procedure was to him very barren, he opposed it only when it was carried over into the region of spirit. It was thought by some that he opposed science as such; but it was only the scientific method in philosophy which encountered his opposition. A science of nature he thought quite possible, though he left it for others to pursue; but a *science* of spirit he considered in the nature of things forever impossible.

The science of the sensationalists daily taught him that all things were idle and empty,³ and that there was nothing substantial but matter. But this could not satisfy his soul; for his faith in God, and love, and virtue, which he had held from his youth up, was more to him than this, and could not be explained away. In the field of the sensible, however, the science of the sensationalists seemed to him to be indisputable, while faith in God seemed equally indisputable in the field of the spiritual. This left him forever with a discord between head and heart, though to him "the stirrings of the pious soul were of far more importance than the cognitions of the understanding."⁴

Jacobi may have found reason for such a dualism even among the sensationalists themselves. For instance, Bonnet did not accept the coarse materialism of the *Encyclopædia*, though he was a Sensationalist. He did not say, as others did, that thought was motion, but that motion in the body was the occasion of thought in the immaterial soul. Moreover, he regarded the mind as substantial, and

¹ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

² Falckenberg, *History of Modern Philosophy*, Eng. trans., p. 310.

³ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁴ Pünjer, *op. cit.*, p. 621.

proved it from the unity of consciousness.¹ So that even within the school itself there were indications which might point Jacobi to the view which he developed,—a dualism between head and heart, between science of the sensible and faith in the supersensible world. Instead of offering any thorough-going criticism of their method in general, the only way he saw was to endeavor to limit it to the field of the science of nature. How this affected his own view of nature, and of the value of natural science, we shall see later. We shall also see that it constitutes his own greatest philosophical limitation.

Aufklärung. After his return from Geneva to his native land, Jacobi found himself under the influence of the Enlightenment, both as a form of culture, and as a philosophy of life and of reality. The earlier dogmatism of Spinoza, Leibniz, and Wolff did not influence him until a later time; but the dogmatic rationalism of the *Aufklärung*, though an outcome of the earlier dogmatism, was a factor in the life of his time, and was, indeed, the prevailing type of thought. Although looking for its speculative support to Leibniz and Wolff, this was its least important side; it concerned itself more with the practical affairs of life. "The basis of the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century was given in the general features of a *secular view of life*, as they had been worked out during the Renaissance by the fresh movements in art, religion, politics, and natural research."² Its theology was deism, and its religion was rationalism,—it "made a negative reduction of what was positive in religion to a so-called Religion of Reason."³ It "enthroned 'sound common sense' as the supreme arbiter, flouted all mysteries, discredited the deeper experiences, ignored the graver questions of the soul, and bounded its views by the narrow horizon of every-day life."⁴ It thus exalted the knowing reason of the individual, and set itself up as the supreme arbiter of all things. It thought it found within itself all that was necessary for knowledge or for life. Its God played no real part in life, but was merely the speculative principle from which all things proceed, and was accordingly completely transcendent.

Such a movement could have only a negative influence upon the very positive spirit of Jacobi; for he was opposed to it from the very outset. Its view of God, its denial of mysteries, its quite unpoetic and rationalistic view of life, were repulsive to him, and

¹ Windelband, *History of Philosophy*, Eng. trans. by Tufts, p. 458.

² *Ibid.*, p. 438.

³ Pünjer, *op. cit.*, p. 650.

⁴ Hedge, *Hours with German Classics*, p. 194.

entirely unsatisfactory. It left man no mystery to himself; it really cut off as illusions all his deeper spiritual experiences and yearnings, and left him with only an ideal which was 'of the earth, earthy.' And though at one with this movement in its belief in a personal God, he could not, however, accept the artificial and mechanical schism which it made between God and the world. He held that God and the world were organic to one another, and that a vital relation must subsist between the two. This relation he conceived it the chief business of his philosophy to show. No positive contribution to Jacobi's thought can therefore be attributed to the *Aufklärung*; but it stirred him up to opposition, and to a more explicit formulation of his own peculiar philosophy.

Spinozism. Shortly after Jacobi's return from Geneva he first came in contact with Spinozism. In 1763 the Berlin Academy prize for an essay "On Evidence in Metaphysical Knowledge" was awarded to Moses Mendelssohn. Jacobi greeted the essay with great pleasure, but was disappointed to find that it was little more than a restatement of the old dogmatic arguments for the existence of God. He regarded this type of method as looking back to Leibniz and Spinoza,—to their mathematical method of demonstration. But Jacobi had learned to look on things with the eye of the Empiricist, and distrusted all demonstrative methods. His conception of philosophy as faith, or belief, or intuition, had begun to take form in his thought.

But it was not till after his famous conversation with Lessing in 1780 that he gave any very careful consideration to Spinoza. Then for some years he carefully studied that philosopher, and in 1785 gave the results of his study to the world in the form of the *Briefe über die Lehre Spinozas*, addressed to Mendelssohn. He found himself completely opposed to Spinoza, and to all philosophy of that type. The method of demonstration appeared to him to be its chief characteristic,—an attempt to deduce the fullness of the universe from one primary principle, in Spinoza's case the principle of substance.

The science of mathematics was in Spinoza's day developing rapidly. Descartes, Leibniz, and Newton had made wonderful discoveries, and the atmosphere of the whole educated world was largely mathematical. Mathematics appeared to be the true type of science, and it was thought that all true science must conform to this model, as the only way in which results could be exact, or could be proved. Modern inductive methods had not yet come into vogue, though Bacon had some time previously called attention to induction, and had to some extent outlined its methods. It was but nat-

ural, then, that the philosophical sciences should endeavor to adopt the mathematical method. It was not thought that the difference in subject-matter called for any difference in method of treatment. Accordingly, Spinoza proposed to himself the task of demonstrating Ethics in geometrical order. Starting out with the concept of Substance, with its attributes and modes, as the geometer does with the concept of the triangle with its sides and angles, he endeavored to deduce, or demonstrate the entire universe, including right and duty.

This method determined by opposition that which Jacobi should adopt. The mathematical method he thought proper enough for the sciences of nature; for, to him, nature was mechanical. Moreover, he always associated demonstration with a mechanical method; for, to him, demonstration was mathematical, not logical. But, since he viewed man as a free personality, and spirit as something radically different from nature, he could not see that in this sphere mathematics could be applicable in any way. And since spirit did not admit of exact measurements, therefore a philosophy of spirit could not be a mathematical, or an exact, or a demonstrative science. An attempt to apply the exact method to supersensible objects, he thought, would inevitably lead to a denial of the very objects with which it started. This was shown clearly in the case of Spinoza and others, who started with God as substance, but came at last to such a view of God as denied any conscious personality, and was, indeed, nothing but atheism and fatalism. This led Jacobi to the opinion that a demonstrative system of philosophy was impossible; and in consequence he was driven to seek the opposite method of direct intuition. So that his study of Spinozism did not make a positive, but only a negative contribution to his thought. It led him to feel confidence in faith, and to formulate his views of mind and supersensible things upon an intuitive and non-mathematical basis.

Criticism. When in 1781 Kant published his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Jacobi had already reached most of his philosophical conceptions. But his study of Kant's great work gave form, if not much content, to his thought. The *Æsthetic*, in which Kant endeavored to show the subjectivity of the forms of space and time, Jacobi conceived to be complete subjective idealism. For if space and time are but subjective determinations of our thought, then the objects which we conceive to be in space and time are equally subjective. The fact that we conceive them to be truly external does not in any way make them such, but only proves that along with the ideas of space and time and objects, we have the idea of the externality of those objects. This does not give real externality,¹

only the 'idea' of externality. Jacobi was in search of some real objectivity, and was thereby led to formulate more completely than ever his doctrine of realism. For he conceived that the problem of philosophy was to find a real objectivity, not only for the objects of our sense perception, but also for the objects of our supersensible perception. This latter was the problem of an objective theism, which Jacobi conceived to be the most fundamental and the most far-reaching of all problems.

The categories of the understanding, which Kant found to be the presupposition of a science of nature, were likewise held to be determinations of the knowing subject, and at the same time applicable to objects as phenomena. They were not, however, applicable to objects as noumena, such as the self, freedom, and God. These never entered the world of phenomena, but had their real being behind the world of sense objects. They belong to the sphere of reason, and the laws of the understanding are not applicable to them. Therefore all arguments employing the Categories are equally incapable of either proving or disproving these Ideas of Reason. An examination of these Kant took up in the Dialectic. But Kant found that in pure reason there might be a faith in these objects, which, however, looked for its support to the practical reason, where there was rational ground for holding to their reality. This became a positive doctrine to Jacobi, who had long before concluded that a demonstration of divine things was impossible. For a time, however, he thought Kant's position denied these in the Pure Reason, only to affirm them in the Practical Reason. This, he conceived, would be an impossible proceeding. But he came later to think that Kant meant in the Pure Reason neither to deny nor to affirm them; while in the Practical Reason he did clearly affirm them. This Jacobi accepted as the true account; and it helped him not only to formulate his own view of faith, but it helped him, likewise, to see more and more that such a faith is not so much feeling as reason. We can notice, therefore, throughout his writings an increasing tendency to give a thought-content to his act of faith.

Gefühlphilosophie. Up to the time of Jacobi, the usually accepted division of mental activities was the Aristotelian bipartite division of theoretical and practical, or understanding and will (including desire). But about this time it began to be felt that this was not an exhaustive division. Baumgarten, Meir, and Sulzer had indicated that this division did not provide a place for the sensations of pleasure and pain, the agreeable and the disagreeable. In 1776 Tetens definitely and with conscious explicitness proclaimed the

discovery of another coördinate power, Feeling, and declared the proper division to be into Feeling, Understanding, and Will. This division was accepted and established by Kant, and has remained the almost unquestioned division throughout subsequent philosophy.¹

While this division was being established, there was another movement which arrived less consciously at a somewhat similar result. The Rationalism of the *Aufklärung* had about spent itself; its inadequacies were beginning to be seen. It had virtually made all existence to consist in universals, and from the days of Spinoza had, accordingly, found great difficulty in providing for individual existences. A static pantheism was its logical result. Against this movement, which was beginning to collapse from its own inherent weakness, there sprang up what has become known as the *Gefühlsphilosophie*, or, otherwise, the Faith-Philosophy. Of this the first explicit advocate and exponent was Hamann, the most prolific writer was Herder, while its clearest interpreter was Jacobi.²

These men conceived that, as existence was individual and not universal, philosophy must be able in some way to grasp these individuals, as they are the only true beings; for only in conceiving these can philosophy conceive the truth. It is not enough, they said, to grasp the concepts of pure scientific thought; the individuals must be known. The true is the only basis for truth, for only as the true is experienced can the truth be known. The scientific concept appeared to them to be an abstract universal, and as such was inadequate to contain the wealth of concrete experience. The only alternative they could see was the concrete individual, for as yet the concept of a concrete universal was unknown to philosophy.

They therefore endeavored to overthrow the doctrine that concepts contain the truth; for as they understood the term, concepts certainly could not contain the fulness of real being. Only in feeling, which was purely individual and concrete, could such individuals be known. All knowledge, then, starts from individual existences, and philosophy deals only with individual essences. This feeling (or faith, as it was likewise called) contains all the world of reality; for by it all individuals are known, and besides individuals there is nothing. This knowledge, however, for the very reason that concepts are abstract, cannot be put into dogma or doctrine, but must remain a matter for the individual soul alone. This mystical individual is opposed to both orthodoxy and rationalism, and contents itself with

¹ Cf. Major, *The Principle of Teleology in the Critical Philosophy of Kant* pp. 1-16.

² Falckenberg, *History of Modern Philosophy*, Eng. trans., p. 310.

the bare assertion of the content of its feeling. It is, indeed, "a conscious un-philosophy."¹

The points which these philosophers emphasized are thus seen to be two: First, that all existence is individual, and that therefore all knowledge must be of individuals; and second, that feeling, not concepts of the understanding, is that by which real existence is known. This, it is seen, amounts not only to an acceptance of the new third element of mind, but to its elevation to a place above the other two, the understanding and the will. The *Gefühlsphilosophie*, therefore, represents the extreme reaction against the rationalism of the current philosophy of the *Aufklärung*. What drove them to this extreme was, probably, the desire to conserve the actuality of God, who in the *Aufklärung* had become a mere name, an abstract universal. Kant, on the other hand, accepted the three elements, but left them coördinate factors of mind. That Kant's position was the truer there can be but little doubt. But that the philosophy of feeling contained an element which was a valid protest against the prevailing Rationalism, we shall endeavor to show in the following chapters.

Jacobi started from this standpoint, which he held in common with the other members of the school. But, as we shall see later, he worked somewhat away from this; for though continuing to hold to their doctrine of immediacy, he came more and more throughout his writings to admit a thought-content in the place of the bare undifferentiated feeling. In this he moved away from the school with which he started, and pointed the way to the more adequate view. In so far as he did this, he prepared the way for Hegel, by showing the inadequacy of the earlier philosophical concepts, and of the earlier view of thought in general.

Romanticism. In Germany, Romanticism was a protest against the hard rationalism of the *Aufklärung*, which had attempted to give a somewhat mathematical account of man, as of some material object. But it was more than a mere protest. It felt the mystery of life, the inexpressible mystery of spiritual existence, and endeavored to give it some expression, however inadequate. Romanticism voiced those hidden aspirations which cannot be measured and catalogued, those deeper feelings which do not readily yield themselves to exact treatment. It was, therefore, not so much a definite philosophy as a *Zeitgeist*, which found expression quite as much in art and literature as in philosophy. The human spirit had become conscious of itself as such, and found that it was possessed of emotions and ideals which could scarcely be expressed in concepts,

¹ Windelband, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, Band I, p. 572.

or which, at least, had never yet found any such expression. It was essentially a movement in which actuality was regarded as dwelling in concrete experiences, rather than in what was considered abstract thought. Schlegel said that those best comprehend truth who have experienced the most moods.¹ All things were interpreted with reference to the needs and spiritual interests of man. Thus did Schelling interpret even nature. It found the depth of reality in the human spirit; and in the experiences and revelations of that spirit all truth was known. The world of sense was but the inadequate expression of the hidden soul of things, in which alone was complete reality.² Romanticism was, then, essentially a return to a spiritual view of things, to a recognition of the reality not only of thought but of feeling. But it could not long find satisfaction in mere spiritual experiences; it rapidly passed into every form of expression, though most readily into art and literature. And when the knowing mind had thus asserted its right to a share in the mental life, the movement gave rise not only to philosophical theories, but likewise to theories of art and literature and history which have greatly enriched the modern world.

With this movement Jacobi was in hearty sympathy, and from it he received much inspiration. Its spirit and purpose were the same as his own, as is seen in the fact that his earlier writings were all romances. He felt the richness of experience, but felt that it could not be put into concepts, *i. e.*, he felt that so far as the understanding was concerned there were great mysteries in human experience. So he held to the opposition between head and heart,—though we are inclined to think that this meant less and less to him as, in the course of his career, he was driven to attempt a formulation of his doctrines. But the opposition never entirely disappeared. He always thought that the heart had deeper experiences than the head could reduce to concepts.

The influence of Romanticism upon Jacobi, then, was to impress upon him the rich content of experience,—the spirituality of life and its forces. For he did not feel that this life could find adequate expression in terms of mere intellect. In this particular he felt very strongly the influence of the Faith Philosophy; for though Romanticism gave him inspiration, the form of his philosophy was largely conditioned by his relations to the Faith Philosophy. But, as we shall see as we proceed, he was not consistent in this even in his early life; and in his later life he departed from it still further. This is seen by his use of the word 'reason' where he had

¹ Royce, *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, p. 176.

² Cf. Hedge, *Martin Luther, Essay on "Classic and Romantic."*

formerly used 'faith,' showing that he recognized the element of thought even in the deeper experiences.

WRITINGS. His chief philosophical works are as follows:

Allwills Briefsammlung, 1774.

Woldemar, a philosophical novel, 1779.

These two are "in essence one and the same." The revelation of this essence takes a double direction, once as fiction in *Allwill*, and again as actuality in *Woldemar*. It has been maintained by Zirngiebl that these two works are the only genuine philosophical works of Jacobi,—that they are the only ones in which his poetic view of things found adequate expression. For where philosophy is only a living power of the soul, and not a system of doctrine, these are the only forms in which it could truly express itself. They are, therefore, "not only the truest mirror, but the only true key to the heart-philosophy of Jacobi."¹ But, as we maintain, there was another element in his philosophy, which became increasingly prominent throughout his life, and which alone entitles him to rank as a philosopher, and which is seen better in some of his other works.

Briefe über die Lehre Spinozas, 1785.

David Hume über den Glauben, oder Idealismus und Realismus with an Appendix *Ueber den transcendentalen Idealismus*, 1785. Kuno Fischer regards this as his most important work. It is in the form of a dialogue between the author and an interlocutor.

Briefe über die Lehre Spinozas. Second edition, containing important appendixes, 1789.

Ueber das Unternehmen des Kriticismus die Vernunft zu Verstande zu bringen, 1801.

Von den göttlichen Dingen, 1811. This was directed chiefly against Schelling.

Werke, a complete edition of his works in six volumes, upon which he was engaged at the time of his death. It was completed by Köppen, 1812-1825.

¹ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-8.

CHAPTER II.

JACOBI'S STANDPOINT AND PROBLEM.

Jacobi's general standpoint was virtually adopted while under the influence of religious Pietism, and before he had given himself seriously to philosophy. His philosophical reading and reflection but led him to develop this standpoint, which may be called spiritualistic empiricism. He believed that all knowledge comes by actual experience, but that experience is more than mere sensibility. The supersensible is as much the object of experience as the sensible, both alike being given in immediate perception. The present chapter will indicate the manner in which he developed this standpoint.

As we have already seen, Jacobi's interest in philosophy was more than the interest of the mere scholar. His purpose was to find a method of knowledge, not for its own sake, but for the spiritual rest which he hoped could be thus obtained. The contemplation of the world was, to him, a means to the life of the spirit.¹ Like Spinoza, he was convinced of the vanity of all merely worldly pursuits and aims,² and with this thought in mind, gave up the mercantile life in order to pursue more directly the life of the spirit.

His philosophy, accordingly, was not, in the first instance, a product of rational thinking, but the expression of his powerful feeling and his deep spiritual life. It was his own individual *Weltanschauung*, and did not constitute a complete theoretical system. It was first implicitly contained in rhapsodies, correspondences, and romances, and only at a later time was made explicit in philosophical treatises. Throughout it all he fully acknowledged a supreme religious purpose, saying that he did not write for the purpose of mere science, but with a distinctly spiritual purpose.³ He further said that he did not intend to construct a philosophy for the schools; for his philosophy was that of his own head and heart, and not according to truth in general.⁴

Jacobi himself anticipated the objections which may be made to his doctrines on the ground that they are the expression of his personal life and character, and that therefore they do not spring from

¹ IV, a, p. xv. Cf. Zeller, *Geschichte der deutschen Philosophie*, p. 438.

² Spinoza, "On the Improvement of the Understanding," Eng. trans. by Elwes, *Spinoza's Works*, Vol. II, p. 3.

³ IV, a, p. xxi.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

the pure love of truth in general.¹ He saw the force of the objection, yet he insisted that this did not prevent the doctrines from having a significance for a world theory.² He admitted, moreover, that those to whom personality did not appear so fundamental as it did to him would not find much in his philosophy.³ He thus showed that he regarded his standpoint and his view of personality as fundamental to an understanding of his doctrines.

Jacobi's empirical standpoint was new to the rationalism of the age, though it was common to him with many other thinkers, and was being worked out not only by Hamann and Herder, but by Kant in a somewhat different way, and by the writers of the Romantic school. It was, indeed, in the air, and philosophy, which is "the speech of the *Zeitgeist*," was being transformed by it. The old deductive methods were losing their hold upon the times, and the newer empirical methods were taking their places. But it was not till some time afterwards that the new methods successfully and completely occupied the field of philosophy.

That Jacobi adopted the new standpoint is seen by his description of what he regards as the task of philosophy. He thought it the business of philosophy, not to construct or deduce life, but merely to give an account of what life itself constructs out of its experiences.⁴ The older philosophy (dogmatism) had tried to deduce life from some concept which seemed to it fundamental, after the manner of geometry with its concept of space. But the true method is not to have one's acts spring from one's philosophy, but one's philosophy from one's acts and life.⁵ Philosophy cannot precede, but must always follow experience. "Out of the enjoyment [experience] of virtue arises the idea of virtuous being; out of the enjoyment [experience] of freedom, the idea of a free being; out of the enjoyment [experience] of life, the idea of a living being; out of the enjoyment [experience] of the divine, similarly, the idea of a God-like being, and of God."⁶

As a strict empiricist, Jacobi emphasized life as all-important and primary, and as the proper starting-point for philosophy; while theory is but secondary, a mere explanation of the facts of life. What he found in life must be given a place in theory; and not as an illusion,⁷ but as a fact to be reckoned with. Life, especially

¹ IV, a, p. xii.

² *Ibid.*, p. lii.

³ *Ibid.*, p. li.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 234-5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

⁷ This is a favorite resort of the old and the new *Aufklärung*, and of some of the Evolution or Pure-Experience philosophies of to-day.

spiritual life with its fulness, must all be provided for by doctrine, or else doctrine must recognize its own short-comings. He says: "I would, as well as I can, bring to light what exists in the spirit of man independent of the flesh, and therewith express at least my disdain for the mud philosophy of our day, which to me is an abomination."¹

This general standpoint grew out of the feeling, common to him with others, that there was not much value in the current deductive systems of philosophy.² But, as he carried the revolt to greater extremes than many others, and as he had his own peculiarities of thought, he found he was often greatly misunderstood. He wrote to Hamann: "I do not know if they understand me. If you understand me, then impart suitable counsel to the honest who in these desert places are distressed and look about them for deliverance, only yet held erect and strengthened through devout presentiment."³ And because Jacobi regarded these spiritual experiences as beyond and deeper than the understanding, he himself found it difficult to express what he meant. He continues in his letter to Hamann: "There is light in my heart, but when I would bring it to the understanding it disappears. Which of the two elements is the true one,—that of the understanding, which, indeed, fixes forms, but behind them shows only a bottomless abyss, or that of the heart, which, indeed, throws light promisingly upwards, but fails in determinate knowledge? Can the human mind grasp the truth, except through the union of both in a single light? And is this union thinkable, except through a miracle?"⁴

This shows the two elements in his view which to the last he found it impossible to reconcile. On the one hand, he was deeply impressed with the reality of the experiences of the heart. He was by nature gifted with a deep mysticism, and with a sense of the supersensible and the divine.⁵ On the other hand, he was impressed with the value of science, and of the concepts of the understanding, or, as he says, of the knowledge of the head. The former constituted the positive element in his doctrine; the latter, the negative. "The positive content of Jacobi's philosophy refers, consequently, to love and life; the negative, to the concept and to science; and between the two stands his prejudice of their irreconcilability."⁶

¹ I, p. 365.

² Zeller, *Geschichte der deutschen Philosophie*, p. 437.

³ I, pp. 366-7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

⁵ Kuhn, *Jacobi und die Philosophie seiner Zeit*, p. 134.

⁶ Zirngiebl, *Jacobi's Leben, Dichten und Denken*, p. 44.

The first or positive element grew out of his conception of the value of the individual and of the individual experiences. This he got largely from Pietism, which, like all movements that sprang from the Reformation, placed primary importance on the individual and his spiritual experiences, as is seen in the doctrine of Justification by Faith. This, probably, more than any other influence, led philosophy from the consideration of ontological and cosmological problems to that of psychological. But when Jacobi wrote, that influence had not yet extended throughout the philosophical world, and the current philosophy of the schools was still of the dogmatic, deductive, type.

His acquaintance with the French Sensational School, and with the writings of the English Empiricists, had convinced him that individual experience, or the psychological method, was the only true philosophical method. This, however, he had already learned, in its religious aspects, through his connection with Pietism, though this movement, of course, placed the emphasis on different aspects of experience. With Locke and Hume he believed that all our knowledge comes from experience in its two aspects of Sensation and Reflection; and it was doubtless from this source that he got this part of his doctrine. With these writers, too, he believed that the limits of individual experience are the limits of philosophical inquiry, and that that of which the individual is conscious constitutes the entire material of philosophical investigation. Hume had thus drawn philosophy down from the skies by showing the impossibility of the application of *a priori* principles outside the range of experience.¹ But by his arbitrary limitation of knowledge to phenomena as impressions upon the senses, Hume left reason a mere elaborative faculty, saying that "no kind of reasoning can give rise to a new idea, . . . but wherever we reason, we must antecedently be possess of clear ideas."²

This limitation of knowledge to phenomena is virtually a denial of the possibility of any purely *a priori* knowledge,—*a priori* in the sense of being entirely independent of experience; and also of any knowledge of *a priori* principles of knowledge. This view of knowledge Jacobi accepted, for he too believed that such knowledge is quite impossible. But while denying the ordinary *a priori* knowledge, there is one kind of knowledge to which he would give the name *a priori*, viz., those concepts and principles which are obtained positively and immediately from the actual, *i. e.*, from intui-

¹ III, p. 69.

² *Treatise of Human Nature* (Selby-Bigge edition), p. 164.

tion, from an experience of the actual.¹ In other words, Jacobi believed that all knowledge issues from experience, but that experience itself contains more than mere phenomena, or sense impressions. Metaphysical principles, he held, are as much given in experience as impressions themselves. This he seems to have learned from his study of Kant, which supplemented his study of Empiricism and Sensationalism. But he regarded Kant's attempt to discover what knowledge could be gained independent of, and even previous to, experience as necessary futile. This, he thought, would mean that a knowledge of the actual could be gained apart from actuality; that the truth could be known apart from the true, a thing which he deemed impossible.²

The epistemology of the Dogmatists had virtually held that truth could be evolved from the mind alone after the manner of geometry. But Jacobi maintained that only in connection with sensibility can the understanding give the true. Sense and understanding must combine in order to produce knowledge. The two are reciprocal elements, and must combine in order that knowledge may arise. "And so one must say, not only of the knowledge which is called *a priori*, but of all knowledge in general, that it cannot be worked up through the sense, but only through the living and active faculty of the soul."³

While opposing the Dogmatists by holding to the necessity of sense perception, he also opposed the Empiricists by viewing mind as an active function. Consciousness is active, and is one with life, which is everywhere an activity. Mind is no dead mirror, for it would then be no consciousness.⁴ Reason is essentially active; it is not a 'torch,' but an 'eye'; for it does not give light,—it sees.⁵ He saw clearly that consciousness must be an active function which judges, and not merely a passive entity which receives material given it from without. He thus moved away from Hume and the older empiricists, from whom, however, he learned much, and for much of whose philosophy he had a good deal of sympathy. Consciousness, to Jacobi, is an active principle which is joined with perceptions, and constitutes reason, which is the essential excellence of our nature.⁶ In this way, "the purest and richest impression has the purest and richest reason for its result."⁷ And this reason is

¹ II, pp. 267-8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 263.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁴ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

⁵ II, p. 266.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

but the indwelling in us of spirit,¹ which Jacobi always conceived as active. The unity which there is in experience is not that of a mere stream or aggregate of experiences, but is due to its being the experience of a real central principle of unity—the soul. As in the universe as a whole, so in the experiences of man, the only unifying principle is spirit.² The human soul is a real principle of unity, for its nature consists especially in this, that it is able to distinguish itself from other things.³

Jacobi thus gives evidence of a very clear conception of what constitutes self-consciousness,—a conception upon which his whole philosophy is based. It would be too much to say, however, that his view is completely adequate, or fully worked out. But he saw clearly the uniqueness of knowledge and of conscious activity, and its essential difference from all the mechanical or biological processes of nature. Any fact of knowledge, or other mental process, does not constitute an object in a world of objects. It has none of the ear-marks of a ‘thing.’ It is of a totally different order, and is in no way a ‘particular,’ after the manner of the objects of the external world. It is, on the contrary, in every case a ‘universal,’ and so can never be a determination of a ‘thing.’ It is a determination of spirit, which alone constitutes a substratum for the universal.

In accordance with this, Jacobi affirmed strenuously that thought is not a mechanical determination, but an activity of spirit, obeying a higher law, which, for want of a better word, is commonly called ‘freedom.’ That is to say, the laws and conceptions which apply to the external world of objects will not apply to the internal world of thought. In so far as man is one among a world of objects, that is, as body, he is governed by the same laws of mechanism and natural necessity which govern all other objects. Freedom and natural necessity are, therefore, joined in man, though *how* it is impossible for one to explain.⁴ It will not do to deny the fact, however, for want of an adequate explanation. That there are two such distinct realms, the one of freedom, the other of necessity, is obvious to all. To deny freedom would be to deny spirit and to reduce all to a mechanism which has an accompanying consciousness.⁵ For if man is not free, then all the products of man are produced necessarily, and intelligence is a mere onlooker.

¹ III, p. 422.

² II, p. 274.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 317.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

We must take freedom as the highest and first, as the absolute beginning, or else we are obliged with Spinoza and his predecessors and successors to accept fatalism, and to reduce ethics to physics.¹ Consciousness, however, will not submit to such a reduction; and, moreover, a universal and infinite nature-mechanism would have no meaning. Just as the knowledge of nature cannot be itself a part of nature, so, in order for nature to have any meaning, there must be persons who are not parts of the nature-mechanism, who are not included in the chain of mechanical necessity. There must be some principle which is outside the process, in order that the process may have any meaning. The assumption that there is an actual and true freedom, then, becomes necessary, though it remains for later investigation to fix the exact limits of freedom and necessity.

Freedom, in Jacobi's conception, means that man's spirit is not subject to the mechanism of nature, but in some manner rises above it, and makes it to be its servant.² This consists in the exercise of the will; for "the independency and inner power of the will, or the possible sovereignty of the intellectual essence over the sensible essence is *de facto* conceded by all men."³ This means that the will is moved by spiritual and not by mere mechanical determination. To consider the spirit as mechanically moved (as with Hartley, Condillac, or Bonnet) would necessitate a mechanics of the soul as all-embracing as Newton's view of the heavens. Moreover, without the conception of freedom, no one would ever know the limits of the determined, or that there are limits; and without the consciousness of a world higher than sense, no one would know what determination means.⁴

Positively, freedom is self-activity, though not an absolute self-activity, but an activity that is moved by ideals which are of divine origin.⁵ It "does not consist in an absurd power of deciding without reasons, nor even in the choice of what is better among useful things, or of rational desire. . . . But it consists in this essentially,—the independence, on the part of the will, of the desires."⁶ In other words, the will is moved, not by desires which are entirely physical, but by ideals which are spiritual; for the choosing and judging spirit can disregard all the promptings of the flesh. That this is an adequate view of desire need hardly be urged; for it is evident that

¹ II, p. 47.

² *Ibid.*, p. 316; III, p. 401.

³ IV, a, p. 28.

⁴ II, pp. 80-1.

⁵ IV, a, p. xxvii; II, pp. 46, 315-6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

the desires of a human being must contain both rational and physical elements; and that the will is not independent of, but has a very close relation to desire.

At this point we see one of Jacobi's peculiar views, which shows his conception of the limitation of the scientific method. He held that supersensible things cannot be treated scientifically. At Geneva he had learned the methods of exact science, and had seen the vain endeavor of the sensationalists to apply these methods to psychic phenomena. In their efforts to make a science of the things of the spirit, commonly so-called, these materialists had taken away all the content of life, and had thus left a deep chasm between science and life. But Jacobi maintained that the soul, which is a free spirit, cannot thus be treated scientifically.¹ He did not deny the appropriateness of these methods to physical phenomena, but held that another method, namely, faith, intuition, and not demonstration, must be adopted when we come to deal with supersensible facts. In this way he could accept the science of the *Aufklärung*, and of the Sensationalists, while he likewise accepted the philosophy of faith or of feeling. This gave him a double world-view, one the scientific, from the standpoint of which he was a skeptic; the other the philosophical, from the standpoint of which he was a strict theist. These different positions he maintained at one and the same time, and never saw their reconciliation, but stood Janus-faced between the two.² He never could reconcile his philosophical view of life with his scientific view of the world, though he somewhat dogmatically maintained the supremacy of the former.³ "Life and science are for Jacobi heterogeneous things. In the one he denies what in the other he posits; all life is to him an immediacy, all thought a mediation. Life exists of itself, but human knowledge is through and through dependent."⁴ In other words, life is a process of immediacy, and this fact philosophy must take as its starting-point; while science or definite knowledge depends upon demonstration, and issues only in abstract concepts.

Instead of seeking a reconciliation of science and life by a careful examination of the method of science, he accepted the scientific method as valid when applied to the facts of nature, and, accordingly, accepted the resulting view of nature. But he could not accept its results in the sphere of the supersensible; though he had no objection to urge against the method as such, but only against

¹ II, p. 314.

² Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

³ Cf. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁴ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

its unsatisfactory results. His reverent regard for facts, especially the facts of the spiritual life, prevented him from being forced to accept the conclusions of the sensationalists and the materialists. He endeavored, however, to discover a new method for the study of supersensible facts, the method of immediacy. This was not original with him, as he held it in common with Hamann, Herder, and others, though he did more than any other to show its true meaning, and to bring it into philosophy. He accordingly came to reserve the term 'science' for those studies to which he considered the exact mathematical method of the sensationalists and dogmatists applicable, namely, the study of nature and all its forms; while he reserved the term 'philosophy' for the study of spiritual things, where he considered the method of immediacy, of intuition, of faith, was alone applicable.

This unfortunate schism in his view of the world shows itself in two ways. On the one hand, it left him with the crude materialistic view of nature, as an absolutely spiritless, purely mechanical system. It was in every way the opposite of spirit.¹ Nature was the region of necessary and regular laws, *i. e.*, of determination; and the methodology of science was therefore mathematics. The great achievements of Newton and other mathematicians had made scientists think that mathematics was the key to all knowledge. It was, therefore, not the fault of Jacobi, but one of the limitations of his age, that he could not conceive of any other scientific method. The biological sciences, which do not use mathematics, had not sufficiently developed, and it was only with their development that it was seen that the mathematical was not the only scientific method. It is to the credit of Jacobi, then, that he could work himself free from the methods in which he had been trained; and it is interesting to find him agreeing with F. Schlegel, that it was to be lamented that since Bacon there had been many attempts to degrade philosophy to a science, after the manner of mathematics and physics.²

On the other hand, his schism between life and science left Jacobi with the view that the facts of life would not submit to any kind of scientific treatment at all,—that no knowledge of the supersensible could be gained by any process of reflection, but only in an immediacy of experience which he called faith or feeling, but came later to call reason. He accordingly opposed the entire philosophy of reflection, which he conceived to subordinate the immediate to mediate knowledge. He regretted that there had been, ever since Aristotle, an attempt to subordinate the immediate to the mediate,

¹ Drews, *Die deutsche Spekulation seit Kant*, Bd. II, p. 7.

² III, p. xxxiii.

perception to reflection, the original to the copy, the essence to the word, the reason to the understanding; to hold nothing for true which cannot be proved, and to regard intuition as of less value than the concept.¹ He thought this kind of philosophy regarded nothing as true which could not be twice shown, once in perception where it was given directly, and once in conception where it was to be demonstrated.

To refute, then, what he called the 'philosophy of reflection' was one side of Jacobi's aim and endeavor. This negative aspect has been thought by many to be his chief service to philosophy. Kuno Fischer says Jacobi's greatest strength comes out in the negative, and that his standpoint appears best in opposition and denial; the more a view was opposite to his own the more marked was his sharpness and shrewdness.² Jacobi's negative position with reference to the previous philosophy is considered his merit by Pünjer also, who says that opinion will probably long differ as to the value of his positive effort to found a special philosophy of Belief or Feeling.³ This is in the main true, for Jacobi did much to show the insufficiency of the analytical method which had so long prevailed in philosophy, and which he calls the 'philosophy of reflection'; though he did not see very clearly the meaning of the synthetic method, which was the method he was endeavoring to formulate. But it is only fair to him to state that he at least showed what a true synthetic method must be, though he never could succeed in setting it forth satisfactorily, even to himself.

Philosophy, as he conceived it, had proceeded by demonstration in the sphere of the understanding, and as such could not touch at all the facts of reason (or faith).⁴ With Descartes this false method had entered philosophy, and ever since his time practically all philosophy had gone on the same line, holding nothing for true which could not be proved, or demonstrated by the understanding. This proceeded on the assumption that all knowledge is mediated by ideas,⁵ and ignored the concrete experiences of a conscious human being.⁶ It made ideas depend only upon ideas, and so on *ad infinitum*. But Jacobi's contention was that ideas come from experiences, directly and immediately.⁷ In other words, his objection was that the earlier philosophy had been entirely deductive, with

¹ II, p. 11.

² *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, Bd. V, p. 218.

³ Pünjer, *Op. cit.*, p. 623.

⁴ IV, a, p. xxx.

⁵ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, pp. 23 ff.

⁶ IV, a, pp. 30 ff.

⁷ *Ibid.*

no empirical element, whereas a true philosophy must be in constant touch with experience. Deduction would, moreover, involve an endless series without ever getting a fundamental principle, or actual experience, and would therefore yield only an unconditioned which is free from material,—empty, and completely indeterminate.¹ This very discerning criticism seems to be an anticipation on the part of Jacobi of Hegel's view of thought as giving a concrete, and not an abstract universal.

Jacobi accepted the current division of the thinking faculty into understanding and reason, but differed from the current view as to what were their respective spheres. To him, the understanding was a faculty of mediation, a mere faculty of concepts, judgments, and conclusions, which can reveal absolutely nothing out of itself.² It simply gets concepts of concepts from concepts, and so gradually attains to ideas, though it does not touch reality.³ It is a faculty of reflection on sense intuitions, a faculty which separates and reunites concepts, judgments, and conclusions,⁴ and is thus a faculty of abstractions.⁵ With Kant, Jacobi regarded the understanding as in no way dealing with reality directly, but depending upon sensibility which furnishes the material of thought. But he differed from Kant in holding that reason too (or faith) furnishes an intuition of the true and the real. Jacobi thought that, while sensibility furnishes the material of our knowledge of sensible objects, the reason (or faith) furnishes just as directly our knowledge of supersensible objects. Kant's *intellectuelle Anschauung* bears some relation to Jacobi's doctrine on this point, though it differs greatly in that Kant conceives this rather as an ideal of knowledge, in which the intellectual element is freed from and does not depend upon the sensible, and as such is possible only in the divine consciousness, and can at best be merely approximated by the human consciousness. Jacobi, on the other hand, conceived his 'rational intuition' as the faculty of supersensible knowledge, or of the knowledge of supersensible objects. Reason was to him quite as much a faculty of intuition as was sense. Indeed, this is the main contention of his entire philosophy.

It is important to notice, at this point, the change which Jacobi made in his use of the terms 'understanding' and 'reason.' The ordinary use of these words was that "*Verstand* (understanding) is the more practical intellect which seeks definite and restricted re-

¹ Pünjer, *op. cit.*, p. 633.

² II, pp. 10-11.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 78, and III, pp. 23 and 93.

sults and knowledges; while *Vernunft* (reason) is a deeper and higher power which aims at completeness."¹ Understanding, then, was the general faculty of cognition, while reason was a higher power which sees the connections of things. As against both of these forms of knowledge, Jacobi, in his earlier writings, insisted on the superior authority of feeling or faith. In his later writings, however, he broadened his use of the term 'reason' to include what Kant had meant by both reason and faith, especially reason in its practical use. Thus "what he had first called *Glaube* he latterly called *Vernunft*,—which is in brief a 'sense for the supersensible,'—an intuition giving higher and complete or total knowledge—an immediate apprehension of the real and the true. As contrasted with this reasonable faith or feeling, he regards *Verstand* as a mere faculty of inference or derivative knowledge, referring one thing to another by the rule of identity."²

Jacobi is thus seen to make a distinction between understanding and reason (faith) which makes the two irreconcilable. Understanding deals with matters which come under what we call science. It deals with concepts and ideas which are derived from objects of sense perception. As such, it is always mediate, and can never reach objects (or the true) directly, but can deal with truth only at second hand, or by demonstration. Reason (faith), on the other hand, which is the organ of philosophy, reaches out to objects, to reality, to the true, in a manner similar to sensibility itself, only that it reaches a different kind of objects, viz., supersensible objects.

The understanding, therefore, will not be able to assert the existence of any real things, but will often be led to deny them altogether, especially the supersensible objects of reason. Kant had shown that the understanding, in attempting to deal with unconditioned objects, falls into antinomies, and Jacobi maintained that it is even led to deny the existence of these objects altogether, simply because it has no means of reaching them. They belong to a totally different sphere of intellectual activity. But what the understanding denies the reason affirms, and neither one can disprove the other, though each is supreme in its own sphere.

Jacobi thus held to a form of the twofold truth,—Science on the one hand, and Faith (Reason) on the other. He is here seen to be anti-rationalistic, for he makes a complete opposition between feeling (reason) and thought (understanding),³ and gives the

¹ Wallace, *The Logic of Hegel*, p. 400.

² *Ibid.*, p. 401. Cf. also Kuhn, *op. cit.*, pp. 156 ff, and Pünjer, *op. cit.*, p. 622.

³ Windelband, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, Bd., II, pp. 338-339.

superiority to the former. It is to be noted, however, that the extreme form of the opposition was no necessary part of Jacobi's doctrine, but came about as a result of the on-sidedness of the *Aufklärung*, and from the rationalism which was the "driving-wheel of the *Aufklärung*."¹ It may be well to recall that this counter-tendency to rationalism had been in the air for some time, and that it took shape not only in the *Geistesphilosophie*, but also in the Romantic movement, as well as in every form of activity. So that "the opposition between science and faith posited by Jacobi is closely connected with the great movement on behalf of feeling which, since Rousseau, had governed the age. . . . He fought for the rights of immediacy, of reality, and of individuality, and in so doing contributed important corrections to the direction which philosophy was on the point of taking, and along which he himself would fain have enticed her."²

But in stating the matter in this way, Jacobi created that contradiction from which he delivered himself only by his *salto mortale*. Finding himself shut up within the region of the conditioned, of the understanding, the only way he could see to get out was by a leap for life into the region of faith beyond. Once there, he was equally unable to return. That is to say, the conditioned and the unconditioned were two distinct and separate spheres, which had nothing to do with each other. He could not conceive the unconditioned as being the principle of knowledge and will in the conditioned, but the two were hopelessly and forever outside each other. Consequently, his "faith and his knowledge constituted two distinct philosophies: hence it was no wonder that he complained that his head and his heart were at variance."³ This constitutes one of the fundamental weaknesses of his system, and leaves him not with one philosophy, but with two. And so contradictory are the two that they can be held together only by force.

We may see, accordingly, his view of what constitutes the sphere and the problem of philosophy. He did not understand philosophy to be a science in the usual meaning of that word, which is mediate knowledge through conceptions. On the contrary, philosophy is an immediate knowledge of the supersensible.⁴ Science deals only with the sensible and the conditioned, and its instrument is the understanding. Accordingly, if we are to have any knowledge of the supersensible at all, there must be a faculty which is higher than

¹ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

² Höfding, *History of Modern Philosophy* Vol. II, p. 120.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁴ Cf. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

understanding.¹ This faculty is reason or faith, and it operates in a positive or mystical way.² And just as sense intuition does not depend upon demonstration, but refers directly to objects themselves, so this higher faculty of reason or faith reveals the objects of reason immediately.³ (It might very well be called rational intuition.) The sphere of this faculty is the sphere of philosophy, which is therefore seen to consist in the setting forth of the objects of reason or faith, as these are revealed immediately to knowledge. Man, then, and his experiences of the supersensible, rather than his experiences of nature, constitute the sphere and problem of 'philosophy.' Philosophy cannot begin with nature, for then it could never get into the unconditioned at all. It must begin immediately with the unconditioned, what Jacobi called the original revelation to the soul, which is more than all nature put together.⁴ And the function of philosophy is therefore "to exhibit in the most conscientious way humanity as it is, be it explicable or inexplicable."⁵ This involves two things: First, philosophy deals with man, not nature. Nature is the field of science; and Jacobi had but little regard for a science of nature as such. For, to him, nature seemed to conceal God, as it revealed only a chain of efficient causes, or a mechanism, in which there was no place for things peculiarly divine, such as virtue and immortality. Secondly, the function of philosophy is to *reveal* existence, not to demonstrate it. "The greatest merit of enquiry is to unveil and to reveal existence. Definition is its means—the way to its goal—its proximate, not its ultimate end. Its ultimate end is that which cannot be defined, the insoluble, the immediate, the simple."⁶

The proper notions of philosophy are, therefore, no *mere* ideas, which rest upon mediation, but immediate convictions, subjectively and objectively certain truths.⁷ Jacobi considered that concepts could not help where there was neither outer nor inner object intuitable through impression or feeling. Every demonstration which does not proceed on this assumption, every explanation which does not give an intuitable object, is, like mathematical points and lines, only a cobweb of the brain.⁸ Not nature, then, but the invisible, the mysterious, the divine, was what he regarded as the field of philosophy.⁹ And these objects, he held, are the objects of philosophy only

¹ II, p. 22.

² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁴ IV, a, p. xli.

⁵ Pünjer, *op. cit.*, p. 623.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 61. Cf. also p. 25.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

in so far as they are able to present themselves in intuition: for what is actual can be intuited.¹ Jacobi's interest in philosophy was therefore with those objects of our thought and higher life which are comprehended under the terms God, Freedom, and Immortality.² These and the relations in which they subsist, and in which they become known to men, are the objects of philosophical inquiry. These alone are matters of universal human interest: all other objects are of merely special and temporary interest.

After carefully examining the standpoints of the various types of philosophy, Jacobi remained unsatisfied. He had no ambition to construct a system, and was driven to an independent formulation of his views only by the necessity of finding a resting-place for his thought; and, more particularly, by his desire to establish theism and religion, which contained for him the whole significance of life. But this was not until he had failed to find contentment either in Sensationalism, in Dogmatism, or in Criticism. His reading of Spinoza, Leibniz, and Wolff had convinced him that in this type of philosophy his purpose of finding a place for the supersensible, or for spiritual objects, for religion and freedom, could not be realized. Nor did he have any better hopes for the Critical Philosophy, which ended in the complete idealism of Fichte. And his reading of Hume and the Geneva school showed him plainly that no place could be found for these in Empiricism.

While these various schools were deductive or inductive as the case might be, their common characteristic was their analytical method.—they started with conceptions which were obtained either *a priori* or *a posteriori*, and their movement was constantly within the circle in which they began. They never got beyond. Kant alone had a synthetic method, but as Jacobi did not thoroughly understand Kant's meaning, he missed the very thing for which he was looking. What he wanted was some method by which he might get out of the eternal hobby-horse movement that kept forever in the place where it began. Descartes had started the method of demonstration from purely *a priori* conceptions, and it had ended in the Dialectic of Kant. Locke had begun purely epistemological studies, starting from subjective sensations, and this movement had ended in the Scepticism of Hume. And it was Jacobi's contention that Kant had not completely answered Hume, but was himself equally subjective, and had found no certainty except in the ideas of the individual consciousness. The whole question, then, of the

¹ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

² III, p. 68.

objective validity of our sensations and of our ideas still stood awaiting an answer.

Dogmatism, Empiricism, and Criticism had all raised, but had not settled, the question as to the objective validity of our perceptions, and especially of our internal perceptions. The question, then, which confronted Jacobi was that of the objective validity of our perceptions and our experiences. The Scottish School had the same problem, and answered it in a somewhat similar way. The affiliations of Jacobi and Reid have often been noted. Jacobi, however, while attempting to answer the question in both its aspects, with reference to both subjective and objective perceptions, was nevertheless more interested in the former. His answer consisted in maintaining that we know objects immediately, without the need of any demonstration. He differed, however, in a marked manner from the Scottish School. Reid had held that our knowledge is in the first instance of ideas, but had held that our ideas are ideas of objects. Jacobi, on the other hand, maintained that our knowledge is immediately of objects, and that our ideas are at once our perceptions. He would not admit that our knowledge was of ideas, but that it was of objects. Hence, he thought, objects were immediately given in the very first act of knowledge. His views on this subject constitute his doctrine of immediacy. In regard to sense perceptions, his doctrine was a form of Realism gradually developing toward Idealism; while his answer with regard to our internal perceptions, or of supersensible objects, constitutes his view of Theism and Religion.

CHAPTER III.

THE DOCTRINE OF IMMEDIACY.

Jacobi's main problem, then, was to discover the method and the manner by which we obtain knowledge of objective existence: for he never doubted that there is objective existence, and that we have a knowledge of it. Kant, starting from the same certainty of knowledge, tried to find out what must be the conditions in the subject which make a knowledge of the object possible. Jacobi, on the other hand, was not interested in analyzing the metaphysical conditions of knowledge, as these are to be found in either the subject or the object, but in the purely epistemological problem of how the subject is related to the object in the concrete process of knowledge. As we have already seen, he had discarded demonstration, or mediation by ideas, as the method of reaching the truth, because, at best, this is a method at second hand. Ideas are to him abstract universals, and as such do not put one in contact with the true reality. They give only the truth, which is but a reflection of the true, and is not the true itself. The true is the only concrete. He says: "Consciousness and life are one."¹ And this seems to mean that both life and knowledge (consciousness) have to do at once with the concrete. All knowledge is a knowledge of reality, of actuality.

In other words, Jacobi was a pure empiricist in the matter of knowledge. He was, indeed, a much stricter empiricist than Locke or Hume, for while they both held that knowledge is only of ideas, Jacobi said that knowledge is directly of objects. As Royce remarks, the mystic is the only complete empiricist. Jacobi, moreover, extended the bounds of direct empirical knowledge much further than Locke or Hume had ever thought of doing. These thinkers had limited it to the data of sensation and reflection: and Hume had gone so far as to make every idea depend upon an impression on the senses, while Locke had made Reflection of little avail by limiting it to the ideas "the mind gets by reflecting on its own operations within itself."² Jacobi had no disposition to question this general standpoint, but he merely extended the field of direct observation so as to include in 'Reflection' the objects of internal as well as external intuition. By this he meant not the operations of the

¹ *Werke*, II, p. 263.

² *Locke, Essay on the Human Understanding*, Bk. II, ch. i, § 4.

mind, but spiritual objects which are in no way objects of sense, such as the existence and personality of God, Freedom, and Immortality.

This, then, is to deny that sense is the only way in which we can relate ourselves directly to reality. There is yet another way, says Jacobi, but it is at the same time another sort of reality that is reached. The first way, the way of sense, relates us only to material objects. The other way, the way of faith, relates us to supersensible and immaterial objects. To this view Jacobi was led after reading Hume, and was subsequently confirmed in it by reading Kant. And it was his reading of Kant that caused the change in his terminology. At first he used the words 'feeling' and 'faith'; the one signifying the faculty used, the other the assurance we had of the actuality of the object, though he at times confused the two. But later he came to use the word 'reason' for both the faculty and the assurance. It is, however, to be noted that Jacobi, though borrowing the terms of other writers, did not always employ them in the original sense. None of the philosophers mentioned above thought of any way in which supersensible objects could be directly known. Knowledge of such objects was to them at best only mediate. Locke said that we know God by demonstration; Hume disavowed such knowledge altogether; while Kant got it only by the round-about way of the practical reason. But in spite of this scepticism, Jacobi was never led to doubt the reality of such objects, or the possibility of our knowing them immediately. He was led only to doubt all preceding methods of knowledge, and was thrown back upon himself to find some new method which should be adequate to the task.

Empiricism had taught him to think that perception was the only method of knowledge which gave the true, and thereby the truth. He accordingly said that there must then be a perception of the supersensible, after the manner of the perception of the sensible, which alone the empiricists recognized. In taking the position that all knowledge is positive, and rests upon perception,¹ Jacobi thought he was merely following out consistently and to its proper limit the fundamental position upon which practically all philosophy is built. Even Descartes and Spinoza, though rationalists and demonstrative philosophers, started with immediate intuitions. The 'I think' of Descartes was an immediate intuition, and from this he made his departure, though he henceforth proceeded by mediation.² Simi-

¹ Cf. Kuhn, *Jacobi u. d. Philos. s. Zeit*, p. 160.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 68-72.

larly, Spinoza started with an intuition,—the identity of thought and extension in God as substance,—and from this he developed his system mediately. This intuition, then, which forms the basis of the presupposition of the identity of knowledge and being, was necessary for Spinoza in order that he might get under way. Thus, from the intuition 'I think,' Descartes developed the I, the not-I, and God; and from the intuition of God, Spinoza developed the fullness of the world of being and of knowledge.¹

This, then, is the method which Jacobi adopted, and which he endeavored to carry through to the end without abandoning it for mediation as soon as he got under way, as the others had done. This he called his method of faith or of immediate intuition; and in the form in which we have outlined it, it is the only form which Jacobi recognized in his earlier writings,—the period of *Allan* and *Woldemar*. Some of the German writers on Jacobi seem to regard this as the only true philosophical method.² But this would be to abandon philosophy as a thought-problem and to mistake a practical for a theoretical solution. It is in this same spirit that Hegel says that philosophy begins where Jacobi ends, for philosophy is an endeavor to resolve the contradictions of life. Jacobi, he says, simply proves the presence of contradictions, and stops there.³ If this were all he did, then Jacobi would not be a philosopher at all. It is true that in his early writings Jacobi was merely the mystic, the dreamer, and that he did not try to formulate his views in any systematic way, but was satisfied to express them in the romantic forms of correspondence and fiction. In his later years, however, he was led to more definite formulations of his doctrines, and came also to see that his principle of immediacy was no less a principle of thought than of feeling, as is evidenced by the fact that he changed his terminology, and that he called his principle 'reason' rather than 'feeling.' We do not regard this change in names as indicating any change in principle, but only as evidence that he came to realize more clearly that thought no less than feeling was a factor in immediacy. Perhaps the best and most complete presentation of his doctrine is to be found in his latest writings,—the general Introduction to his collected works, which is prefixed to the second volume. It will be our task now to follow him in more detail in his exposition of his doctrine, as this can be gathered from his complete works.

Jacobi's general attitude was that of the Faith Philosophy. This

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 76, 78.

² *E. g.*, Kuhn and Zirngiebl.

³ Cf. Lévy-Bruhl, *La philosophie de Jacobi*, pp. 247-8. For Hegel's criticism of Jacobi cf. Hegel, *Werke*, Bd. I, pp. 50-112; Bd. V, pp. 126 ff; Bd. XV, pp. 486 ff.

was a general opposition to a demonstrative system, as we have already seen. It directed itself at times chiefly against Kant, regarding him as the type of the philosophy of reflection. Thus Höffding speaks of "a very significant opposition offered by a group of men who all, under different forms, maintained the significance of immediate feeling, and of historical tradition; speaking broadly, we may say they defended the undivided, concentrated activity of the spirit in opposition to Kant's analysis and criticism which led him, at so many points, to make sharp distinctions between elements which, as a matter of fact, are only given in indissoluble union. These men, for the most part, do Kant injustice; for they overlook the attempts which he himself made to reunite that which he had only put asunder for the sake of clearness, and the furtherance of investigation."¹ This opposition to Kant grew out of their opposition to the philosophy of the *Aufklärung*, to which they thought he still belonged. They had come to distrust mere reason, and conceived logical thought to be abstract, and therefore divorced from the true, in immediate apprehension of which alone they thought knowledge could be gained. Hamann thought knowledge the most abstract form of our existence, and that only by means of feeling "do abstractions get hands, feet, or wings."² This extravagant view Jacobi adopted, and conceived that thought is not the true way of life, but that the way of life is mysterious (mystical), and not syllogistic, and not mechanical.³

Knowledge, then, does not depend primarily upon a reasoning process, according to Jacobi, but upon an immediate intuition. Concerning Allwill, through whom Jacobi speaks his own views, he says: "What he had investigated, he so sought to impress on himself, that it should remain with him. All his mighty convictions rest upon immediate intuition."⁴ To him, therefore, "the validity of the sensible evidence is superior to every rational conclusion."⁵ Everything depends on perception or intuition. This is excellent above all processes of inference; for the latter cannot discover that anything is, but themselves presuppose a consciousness of the true upon which they rest. Understanding depends upon and is only the hand-maid of intuition, from which it receives all the material which it elaborates. Accordingly, "the purest and richest impression has as a result the purest and richest reason."⁶ All the material

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 110.

² *Ibid.*, p. 112.

³ IV, a, p. 249.

⁴ I, p. xiii.

⁵ Zirngiebl, *Jacobi's Leben, Dichten und Denken*, p. 71.

⁶ II, p. 270.

of knowledge comes through intuition (sense or reason), and is presented to the understanding. We cannot absolutely create anything by means of the understanding alone. Jacobi, therefore, thought Kant's search for purely *a priori* knowledge wholly futile. He did not see that Kant was not trying to discover knowledge which should be independent of all experience, but knowledge of *a priori* principles which entered into, and therefore were constitutive of, all experience.

In opposition to the Sensationalists who held that all knowledge comes from sensation, and to Kant who held that pure *a priori* knowledge is possible, Jacobi maintained that the receptive part of mind is two-fold. First, there is sensibility, or the faculty of sense impression, which reveals objects of the external world immediately to the mind. Secondly, there is spiritual feeling or faith,¹ which he came later to call 'reason.' This was his own peculiar philosophical position, and marks him off from others more than any other of his doctrines. He here used the word 'reason' in a new and peculiar sense. Heretofore 'reason,' when different from the understanding, had been used to denote a higher faculty of thought, a faculty which did more than elaborate the data of sense-impression. There is, however, some historical warrant for Jacobi's use of the term, in that reason as thus used had denoted the faculty of the unconditioned. Kant had used it in this way, and had dealt with the problems of the Soul, Freedom, and God, calling them Ideas of Reason.

His use of the words 'faith,' 'belief,' with reference to the same faculty and the assurance of its truthfulness, is likewise not altogether unlike previous uses of these words. Kant had used 'faith' to denote that belief in the Ideas of Reason which persists beyond all the scepticism of the Dialectic. But Hume is the one who furnished to Jacobi the chief warrant for this use of the term. He uses 'belief' to denote the assurance we have of the reality of objects, which are present to the senses, and thereby to distinguish knowledge from imagination. Faith or Belief is the name of that feeling of certainty which is attached to our knowledge of actual objects, and which distinguishes knowledge from imagination, which has to do only with fictions.² Belief, or Faith, then is the conviction we have of the actuality of the objects of perception,—a conviction which does not rest on proof.³ And when this has reference to

¹ II, p. 60.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 144, 147, 148, 153, 156 ff.; and Hume, *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Section V, Part iii.

³ IV, a, p. 210.

supersensible objects, it is an immediate reflection of the divine knowledge and will in the finite spirit of man.¹ Certainty pertains as much to reason and its objects, as to sense and its objects. Certainty and reason go together.² From this direct assurance in intuition all certainty arises. "How can we strive for certainty unless we are already in possession of some certainty? And how can it be known to us except by that which we already know with certainty? This leads us to the idea of an immediate certainty, which needs no proof, but absolutely excludes all proof, being itself above the idea (*Vorstellung*) corresponding to the represented object, and hence having its reason in itself. The conviction from proof is a conviction at second hand; it rests on comparison, and can never be quite sure and complete."³

There are, then, two faculties of perception, Sense and Reason (or Faith). These two faculties are, for Jacobi, very much alike in form. First, they are alike in view of the nature of their revelations. Both reveal their objects immediately to knowledge, without the mediation of any process of proof. Secondly, they are alike in that they both bring to consciousness actual substantial objects. Thirdly, they are alike in view of the immediate certainty wherewith they reflect their objects in consciousness.⁴ They differ only in the objects which each reveals. Sense, on the one hand, reveals the sensible real, the real of the external world of sense objects. Reason, on the other hand, reveals the supersensible real, the real of the supersensible or spiritual objects.⁵ The process of the first is an impression, and that of the second is a kind of feeling. The conceptions of the first are called objects; those of the second are called Ideas,⁶ or, as Kant calls them, Ideas of Reason. To both of these is attached a certain feeling of actuality that enables one to distinguish the true from the false, truth from fiction. This feeling is Belief. But Jacobi was somewhat careless in his use of terms, and seems at times to call this assurance 'faith' as well as 'feeling.' Consequently, 'faith' represents not only the faculty of supersensuous knowledge, but also at times the assurance of the actuality of the objects of that knowledge. This is due to the double use of the word *Glaube*.

It is thus easily seen, that, to Jacobi, the 'power of faith' is a

¹ II, pp. 55-56.

² III, pp. 314-315.

³ IV, a, p. 210.

⁴ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, pp. 271-2.

⁵ II, p. 62.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-2. Cf. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

faculty above reason,¹ either in the earlier sense of reason as equivalent to understanding, or in the later as a power of perception of supersensible objects. For while it is reason that perceives, it is faith which gives certainty. Reason, as a perceptive faculty, presupposes the actual existence of the true;² and reveals to us the true, the good, and the beautiful.³ The original light of reason, however, is faith,⁴ i. e., it is faith which gives the assurance that what the reason reveals is actuality and not fiction.

Jacobi's plea, accordingly, was for the recognition of a faculty to which the supersensible shall be true, and not a mere fiction,—a faculty which shall recognize the true in and above phenomena, and which is different from sense and understanding.⁵ This faculty, then, is reason, and it is an eye for spiritual things; and he calls it the "soul-eye," as sense is the "appearance-eye."⁶ He appeals to Socrates and Plato as authority for thus speaking of a higher reason.—a faculty which apprehends the spiritual.⁷ But above this, again, is Faith, Belief, which is the assurance of the actuality of these objects.

Reason, then, becomes the faculty of direct and immediate knowledge, as Understanding is the faculty of indirect and mediate knowledge.⁸ Knowledge of the former sort is in no way dependent upon proof, but is independent and above proof.⁹ Here only are Providence and Freedom truly known.¹⁰ These man does not ordinarily dispute, for he naturally believes both his sense and his reason, since upon this acceptance depends all knowledge.¹¹ We are all born into faith just as we are born into society.¹² And all actuality, the corporeal which the senses reveal, as well as the spiritual which the reason reveals, is to man certified through Faith (Belief) alone. There is no certainty outside and above this.¹³

Reason, therefore, is not founded upon any power of demonstration (understanding); but demonstration is founded upon reason.

¹ II, p. 14.

² III, p. 32.

³ II, p. 72.

⁴ IV, a, p. xlii.

⁵ II, p. 73.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹² IV, a, p. 210.

¹³ II, pp. 108-9.

With this begins knowledge and science, *i. e.*, they begin with the material furnished by sense and reason as faculties of perception.¹ But Jacobi did not develop this further knowledge as we might wish; he seemed satisfied to leave it less organized than the spirit of his system would permit. His indisposition to systematize what he conceived to be the revelations of reason is no doubt due to his vein of mysticism, which was a relic of his early Pietistic training. He seemed afraid to analyze carefully, lest he should lose the actual in the thought, the true in the truth. This defect was the result of his inherent distrust of the understanding, which he conceived could not deal faithfully with the supersensible, but would turn it into falsehood. The understanding was to him a faculty of the conditioned; while the Ideas of Reason were unconditioned, and were therefore outside the sphere of the understanding.

This immediacy of reason Jacobi took to be the starting-point of philosophy, and in this he differed greatly from Hegel, who regarded such an immediacy as the result of thought, *i. e.*, as thought's highest attainment rather than its beginning. To Jacobi, however, reason (*Vernunft*) constitutes the data of all thought (*Verstand*), and without this we get only empty form without content.² "All human knowledge proceeds from revelation and faith."³ "The element of all human knowledge and activity is faith."⁴ This knowledge is possible to man because he is spirit, and to him, therefore, the Giver of that spirit can be present,—more present to his heart than nature is to his outward senses. The true, the beautiful, and the good are more to his inner sense than sensible objects are to his outer sense.⁵ Jacobi accordingly conceived that we believe in God "because we see Him," though he is not visible to the bodily eye. Yet He is an appearance to every high and noble man. And, moreover, "'nothing is more like God,' says Socrates through Plato, 'than that one among us who is most righteous.'"⁶

The truth of intuition, then, is in the fact that the objects themselves are revealed directly to us. It is the intuition of reason which affords us a knowledge of supersensible objects, that is, affords us assurance of their reality and truth. Jacobi called his philosophy the philosophy of pure objective feeling, because it recognizes the authority of this feeling as the highest, and builds upon this

¹ II, p. 111.

² *Ibid.*, p. 112.

³ III, p. xxxiii.

⁴ IV, a, p. 223.

⁵ II, pp. 114-120.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

authority.¹ "All actuality, the corporeal which reveals itself to the senses, as well as the spiritual which reveals itself to the reason, is authenticated in man only through feeling; there is no authority outside of or above this."²

It is in this faculty of supersensuous feeling (which Jacobi later called reason) that man finds his peculiar character. It is this alone which makes him superior to animals. "The impression, however, which grounds knowledge in the sensuous intuition (called the proper knowledge) is as little superior to feeling [reason], which grounds knowledge in faith, as the order of animals is superior to the order of men, the material world to the intellectual, or nature to its author."³ This "rational intuition"⁴ is man's peculiar power, and "it is solely and alone by the *proprium* of reason that man is elevated above mere animal being." Jacobi thus showed that he saw clearly the distinction between man and animal, between knowledge and instinct, between the process of thought and the process of nature. We may not think he gave a completely satisfactory account of the distinction, but he certainly saw the great difference. And to have seen this distinction at a time when one man could say, and a school of thought could practically believe, that the 'brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile,'⁵ was a very important advance for thought, and, indeed, the first great step toward a true philosophy of mind which should recognize man's power of self-consciousness as that which marks him off from all other orders of terrestrial existence. To Jacobi, then, man is not merely a higher species of animal, not a member of a mechanical order of nature, not a monad or member of a graduated order, as with Leibniz, but, in view of his reason and his knowledge, he is something absolutely different from nature. Jacobi reached, in fact, the modern point of view, in which it is held that the knowledge of nature cannot be itself a part of nature,⁶ and in which there is held to be a complete distinction between knowledge and nature.

The knowledge which comes through feeling in this way, Jacobi called 'revelation.' And in accordance with this he affirmed two

¹ II, p. 61.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 108-9.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁵ Cabanis (1757-1808). Cf. Höfding, *op. cit.*, II, p. 300.

⁶ Cf. T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 11: "Can the knowledge of nature be itself a part or product of nature, in that sense of nature in which it is said to be an object of knowledge? This is our first question. If it is answered in the negative, we shall at least have satisfied ourselves that man, in respect of the function called knowledge, is not merely a child of nature."

principles: First, that "without all revelation (every original thing in feeling) man would stand in the series of animals, the most rational indeed, and first, but also the most essentially wild and unhappy." And second, that "without free use and proper understanding of divine truth, man would be degraded to a mere blind tool. And as a blind tool, to what conceivable purpose? and degraded wherefrom? Here vanishes all thought." But this revelation is not directly to knowledge, but to feeling (reason) and so needs careful interpretation. "The original revelation of God to mankind is no revelation in image and word, but a dawning in the inner feeling. . . . And the divinely imparted truth can, therefore, be misunderstood, it can be darkened and misconceived."¹

It will thus be seen that to Jacobi the first step in knowledge is the revelation or the experience of the self, which as a given fact stands above all proof or demonstration. Some principles thus need no proof, for all things which can be brought to proof are already in conviction, and need no proof. Such is 'I am.' This is itself immediate, and upon it all others depend.² The business of the philosopher, then, is not to build up or to deduce experience, but merely to give an interpretation of the content of the original revelation, or experience.

There are then two phases in man's consciousness, the conditioned and the unconditioned. The former is the element of sense, or of nature, and the latter the element of reason, or the supernatural. Of the latter we have a better idea than of the former.³ "One can call sense and reason the *material* origins of knowledge, and the understanding the *formal*. They are the organs through which the sensible and the supersensible objects come into human consciousness, with the witness, accordingly, for their objective validity."⁴ The understanding works only upon the materials of knowledge thus given, and out of these produces the systematic form of knowledge which can come only after experience. It is a *Nachsinnen*, and has to do only with that which perception brings forward. Much of the language of Jacobi in this and similar connections would lead one to think that he denied *in toto* the possibility of synthetic judgments *a priori*. He spoke of the necessity of the experience of the true as the prerequisite of the knowledge which is truth. This, strictly interpreted, would mean that knowledge must *always* follow experience, and that it could never anticipate experience.

¹ III, p. xx.

² V, pp. 121-3. Cf. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

³ IV, b, pp. 152-5.

⁴ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

From this it becomes evident that Jacobi never saw the true nature of synthetic judgments. He conceived synthesis as but a form of thought elaboration, forever moving within a circumscribed area. He did not see that synthetic judgments can give a real connection of thought between data and conclusion, *i. e.*, can pass with certainty from the given to what the given involves. Had he perceived this he would have found synthesis just the instrument for his purpose, for he could thus have reached by thought what he saw no way to reach but by perception.¹

Faith, then, was to Jacobi a natural belief in the reality of the objects of knowledge which are revealed to sense and reason. Revelation is possible only in respect to real objects. Reason (faith), is the faculty of setting before us that which is itself true, good, and beautiful, with perfect certainty of its objective validity.² "Reason plainly presupposes the true, as the outer sense space, and the inner sense time, and exists only as the faculty of this presupposition. So that where this presupposition is wanting there is no reason. The true must therefore be possessed by man just as certainly as he possesses reason."³

Like Descartes and modern philosophy generally, Jacobi found the first foothold of certainty in the individual,—in the knowledge which the conscious self has of its experiences. "The root of all evidence is in the clear consciousness of a perception; we see ourselves only in a mirror."⁴ The presence of the true and the actual to the soul which realizes its own being is itself all the evidence which can be given or is required. This immediate union of the true with truth or with knowledge is the only principle of certainty, and by it alone being and thought hold together.

This recognition of knowledge as containing actuality is a very important point to notice; for it is on this rock that so many philosophical systems have gone to pieces. The Sensationalists made the internal sensation the only thing of which there was any certainty, and therefore found it impossible to give any account of the world of objects, either sensible or supersensible. Some of the idealists had made the idea everything, and were similarly unable to get a real objective world. While, on the other hand, the materialists, having made the object the only real thing, were accordingly unable to get any true subject, not even a subject for their real

¹ Vide *supra*, p. 31. Cf. Appendix to *David Hume*, "Ueber d. transcendentalen Idealismus," *Werke*, II, pp. 291-310.

² II, p. 11.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁴ VI, p. 201.

object. It would be too much to say that Jacobi gave a sufficient account of the problem, or that he completely saw the solution, but he at least pointed the way to Hegel and the modern logicians who see that knowledge is a subject-object relation, and that in the judgment the mind is related directly to reality, and that our primary judgments are founded upon this immediate relation of mind to its object.¹ To separate mind and its object is to make a division which no subsequent effort can overcome.

But Jacobi did not feel quite sure that he had established the objective validity of the judgment, against the older empiricists and dogmatists. He still thought he had to assure himself by the forcible means of a '*salto mortale*.' Having been entangled in the meshes of the subjectivism of the current empirical philosophy, and the demonstrative uncertainties of the dogmatic schools, he felt that he had not quite extricated himself. He thought he was on the firm and safe ground of direct perception in his doctrine of immediacy, but he could not see its relation to the earlier uncertain ground of reflection or demonstration. He thought that from the sphere of the understanding to that of reason there was no open way; to get from one to the other required a leap in the dark. When once a person finds himself on the dizzy heights of speculation, there is no way back but to cast one's self into the abyss of faith.² The understanding in its self-sufficiency thinks there is no way to the actual, but faith separates itself from understanding, and throws itself immediately upon the actual. We must say, then, that "therefore—this is the *salto*—every principle of mediate knowledge and wisdom must be false, and the opposite necessarily true, *i. e.*, there are immediate truths, and the knowledge of the objective being of things is one of them."³

The foundation of all knowledge was thus, to Jacobi, intuition or immediacy. The understanding, however, as an elaborative faculty, works only upon 'the given' of sense perception, and produces science. The unconditioned being is equally 'given,' but does not submit itself to the understanding. "All scientific thought is mediate, and presupposes an immediate which itself cannot conceive. . . . It is the *πρῶτον ψεύδος* of the rationalistic *Aufklärung* to believe only what can be scientifically proven. Unconditional being can never be proven, but only immediately felt."⁴

It is evident that Jacobi did not admit that sciences could be made

¹ Cf. Bosanquet, *Logic*, Vol. I, pp. 76 ff.

² Cf. Pünjer, *op. cit.*, p. 632.

³ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 82. Cf. Jacobi, IV, a, pp. xxxix-xl, 59.

⁴ Windelband, *op. cit.*, II, p. 335.

out of the material of both kinds of perception. Science is possible only in the region of the conditioned, as this alone can be presented to the understanding. The knowledge which comes from the perception of the supersensible constitutes philosophy in the proper sense of the term, but not philosophy as a science. This arbitrary limitation of the word 'science' was due to the current ideal of exactness which mathematics had furnished to science,—a method which could be applied only to the sciences of nature. The unconditioned or the supersensible is, therefore, not a proper sphere for the understanding, which, as a faculty of the conditioned, can operate only on sense material. But to Jacobi the understanding remained the only faculty of explanation or interpretation: therefore, any attempt at a formulation of the knowledge received through reason must necessarily be by means of the understanding. In his psychology there is no other faculty to which this task can be allotted. He was therefore cut off from any systematization of the content of philosophy by his own view of mind. He was conscious of this limitation, and accordingly tried to content himself without a definite exposition of his doctrines of the supersensible, and to limit himself to little more than bare affirmations of content. This renders an exposition of his views peculiarly difficult, not only for himself but also for the critic. But he did not remain true to his self-made limitations, and as a consequence we have a rather full exposition of some phases of his philosophy. This is particularly true of his later writings, where, to some extent, he got beyond his earlier limitations. But at present we are concerned not with the content, but only with the form of his immediacy.

Jacobi's faith may be called 'Natural Faith,' as distinguished from Kant's 'Rational Faith.' Jacobi's 'faith' is directed to a certain given actuality, which is revealed to us immediately. Kant's 'faith' is a certainty grounded only in our practical nature. To Jacobi, reason was immediate perception of the supersensible; while to Kant reason was no immediacy, but only a higher process of mediation than the understanding. According to Kant, the 'reason' which Jacobi conceived is impossible.¹ To Kant, also, 'faith' was not, as to Jacobi, the assurance of the presence of the actual objects, but only the belief in the far-off actuality of the objects. Kant's 'faith' is a faith which arises in Practical Reason, and as such is an inference; while Jacobi conceived of faith as a form of immediacy in which the objects reveal themselves to us directly. "Faith is the adumbration of the divine knowing and willing in the

¹ Kuno Fischer, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie* Bd. V, p. 227.

finite spirit of man.”¹ For both, faith or belief was the end of philosophy,—knowledge must be transcended in the exercise of faith. But with Jacobi, philosophy must also begin with faith. For the material furnished by faith and reason as a form of perception is the content out of which philosophy as such is constructed. It is reason and faith, then, which reach the highest objects, while science or understanding is confined to sense objects. But the understanding receives the revelations of the reason, for “the consciousness of the reason and its revelations is possible only in an understanding.”² Science, then, does not itself reach the highest truths, for these can be reached only by reason.³ So that “this part of mind [understanding] sees only with concepts what the other [reason] does not see; it is with seeing eyes blind, as the other with blind eyes sees.”⁴

In reason, then, rather than in understanding, the supersensible objects are reached. And of these faith gives the assurance that they are actual and not cobwebs of the brain. Faith, then, contains the assurance: first, of our own ego, and its states, as the common basis of all our experiences, and the foundation of all our further faith;⁵ secondly, of the reality of external sensible things, the knowledge of which it is the peculiar business of the understanding to construct into the various sciences of nature;⁶ thirdly, and chiefly, of the supersensible world of God, Freedom, and Immortality. These are the peculiar and proper objects of philosophy.

This does not leave mind a mere passive function, a mirror, as Professor Wilde seems to think.⁷ Jacobi expressly says he does not regard mind as passive. Nor does his doctrine necessitate such a view. Reason, he says, is not a light, it is an eye. Again, he says it is no dead mirror.⁸ He merely makes reason an active faculty of perception rather than, as usual, a faculty of inference. But as perception is always regarded as active, therefore reason must be active. Then he assigned to understanding all the elaborative processes of the mind, which have usually been considered as belonging to mind as a whole. This, however, is not the same as making reason passive, but, on the contrary, leaves it an active perception.

Nor do we regard the interpretation of the same writer as cor-

¹ II, p. 55.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

³ III, pp. 26–7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁵ V, pp. 121–3. Cf. Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

⁶ IV, a, p. 211; II, p. 141 ff.

⁷ Cf. Wilde, *F. H. Jacobi*, pp. 48–49. Cf. Jacobi, II, p. 272.

⁸ II, p. 266.

rect, when he says that Jacobi is a Realist in the sense that he makes the object more than the subject. If we are to speak of Jacobi in this way at all, we need to remember that the principles and objects of faith are not 'objects' in the materialist's sense, but that, on the contrary, the supersensible objects of the spiritual world are to him the true objects. Jacobi regarded God as more than the individual subject: and in so far as God is an 'object' to the individual, Jacobi is a realist.—but he is a spiritualistic realist. On the other hand, he conceived God to be the infinite subject, and all other things to have their reality in Him, and, therefore, may be equally well regarded as a spiritualistic idealist. There is no warrant for calling him a realist in the sense of materialistic realist. He agreed with the idealists rather than with the realists in his view of the ultimate constitution of the universe: for he held that spirit, not matter, is the logical prius and the final meaning of all things.

The interpretation which the same writer gives of Jacobi's view of perception seems also to come short of adequacy. He says that Jacobi's doctrine of immediate knowledge "is really the attempt to rid knowledge of the thought element in it."¹ This would be true only of Jacobi's earlier expositions of perception, where he called it a form of feeling: but it is the contention of this Study that his later adoption of the word 'reason' in place of 'feeling' is a recognition, or a restoration, of the thought element in reason or judgment. The fact, too, that, while at first Hegel criticised Jacobi as placing truth in feeling, he later came to think more favorably of him, is evidence that Hegel recognized Jacobi as understanding by reason not only feeling but thought.² Instead, then, of attempting to rid perception of the thought element, Jacobi's later writings, at least, fully recognized this element. In order to knowledge the object requires the activity of the subject, and this is a thought element.

Jacobi's view of perception is, then, but the early crude form of the doctrine of judgment as a subject-object relation.—a doctrine which is now a common-place in epistemology. Earlier epistemology had separated subject and object in the very first process of knowledge, so that knowledge was defined as the comparison of ideas. Later it was regarded as a comparison of the idea with the object. Both of these forms left knowledge hanging in the air. Jacobi was one of the first to see, though somewhat confusedly we admit, that knowledge consists of relations in which subject and object are given in the one act of thought. Such an epistemology has no longer to ask and answer the impossible question, Is our

¹ Wilde, *op. cit.*, p. 57. Cf. pp. 57-60.

² Lévy-Bruhl, *La philosophie de Jacobi*, p. 257.

knowledge a knowledge of reality? So long as this question was necessary, philosophy made no progress, for it was never sure that it was not all a fiction of the imagination.

The fact, then, that "in his psychology Jacobi made *Verstand* wholly subordinate to the two perceptive faculties, *Vernunft* and *Sinn*,"¹ should not be taken to involve the passivity of mind. For it must be remembered that to him *Verstand* was only a faculty of inferences and elaboration, and that, accordingly, *Vernunft* and *Sinn* are active functions of perception and judgment. It can be correct to say that "the object is not constituted for us by thought,"² only if we mean the thought of the individual; but the statement is misleading if it be meant that the object of knowledge for the individual contains no thought element. On the contrary, Jacobi held that thought (spirit) is constitutive of all things. He saw only less clearly than Kant that knowledge consists in a subject-object relation,—that in every act of knowledge the mind acts upon a given object, which object has its reality only as it is the expression of mind.

The part of Jacobi's doctrine of immediacy which most directly challenges the ordinary view is his claim that God and Freedom and Immortality are known in direct perception. Kant had left these objects only problematical in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, but had tried to establish them in the *Praktischen Vernunft*. Jacobi was not satisfied, however, that what can be but a fiction to Pure Reason can be a fact to Practical Reason; and, having discarded all methods of demonstration, he sought to find these objects in rational perception or intuition,—a method inconceivable to either the senses or the understanding. Here, then, we see Jacobi adopting what he considered the only starting-point for philosophy, and, as we have seen, what actually was the starting-point of both Descartes and Spinoza. But Jacobi did not think the revelations of reason could be elaborated into a science, but must stand in their bare isolation. However, after coming to see that supersensible perception must not only be feeling, but also reason, he looked with more favor upon a systematic philosophy, and in his later writings, particularly in his General Introduction to his collected works, we find a more complete presentation of his doctrine.

Two distinct purposes are evidently confused in the mind of Jacobi. The first is to furnish a working plan of life,—a practical program of life and conduct. The other is to give a philosophical theory of life. Not that these two could not be given together, for

¹ Wilde, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

it is doubtful if they could be kept apart. Theory inevitably has its effect on life, and life on theory: but to hold the two in confusion is not the only way of holding them together. His mysticism and his view of thought as abstract led him to fear to bring the wealth of rational intuition to the full light of understanding. Hence his early doctrine was intensely individualistic, and this he did not entirely shake off even in the latest form which he gave to it. He never could quite free himself from the idea that to bring reason to understanding would be to place it among conditioned objects, and hence to rob it of its spiritual character. But just so far as he was influenced by this conception, he failed to see the universal character of thought. In this, however, Jacobi was not conscious of trying to separate the spiritual from thought, but only from science, the sphere of the understanding. In this unwarranted distinction between Science and Philosophy, then, he did not sever part of our life from thought, but only made a dualism in our thought. But if there is to be a unity in man, there must be a unity in mental functions. But, as we have seen, Jacobi himself saw this necessity, and though he never healed the dualism, he made it of less and less importance in his doctrine.

In other words, there is a growing consciousness throughout Jacobi's works that these higher reaches of knowledge which he calls feeling, reason, and faith, cannot be different from, but are only higher forms of thought. As Hegel says, "How belief and intuition, when transformed to these higher regions, differ from thought, it is impossible for any one to say."¹ In other words, these functions as forms of thought cannot be regarded as bare immediacy, as Jacobi was inclined to regard them. Like all thought, they must be the joint product of immediacy and mediation, and as such are susceptible of the same systematic treatment and organization. If they contribute to our thought at all, they must submit to mediation in the very act of being taken into that thought. The same may be said of the immediate knowledge of moral and religious principles. If these exclude mediation entirely, then they should be quite independent of all development and education, and should be clear and distinct from the outset, just as the opponents of Innate Ideas saw, and as even the upholders of that doctrine came later to see. To be fully and completely immediate would be to have no relation whatever to the other parts of our knowledge, and therefore not to knowledge at all. It is evident, then, that what he claimed to be immediate could not be so in the full meaning of the term.

¹ Wallace, *The Logic of Hegel*, p. 125.

If Jacobi's view of immediacy were possible at all, it would render *self*-consciousness impossible. At most he could have thought, only on the plane of consciousness. For pure immediacy means that thought has to do merely with the content, and not with the relation of the content to the self. But thought thinks itself, and this is what we mean by self-consciousness. All this would be impossible if pure immediacy were the form of thought. Religion and morality would never know themselves as such, but would be sunk in the depths of their very richness of content. All this Jacobi felt in a way; and only in so far as he got beyond the standpoint of immediacy did he formulate a philosophy at all. His limitation consists largely in the fact that he never entirely overcame this view, —never saw the true relations of immediacy and mediation in thought. He accordingly made abstractions of the two mental processes, and separated them without ever seeing his way to a more fundamental reconciliation.

Jacobi's service, however, consisted in showing that there is an element of immediacy in thought. Earlier philosophy had conceived that mediation was the only element in thought. For instance, Spinoza, though recognizing immediacy as the starting-point of philosophy, made no further use of it, except at those few times when it did not enter into his system. All the dogmatists had regarded thought as purely mediate, and therefore abstract. Jacobi showed that there was an element of immediacy in thought, and that thought was therefore concrete. But he did not see the full significance of his contribution, and therefore did not set it forth adequately, defining it constantly in its negative relation to mediation. Hegel, however, saw its meaning, and for the first time in modern philosophy, he set forth thought in its full concreteness. But the element Jacobi contributed was a necessary part of the synthesis.

CHAPTER IV.

JACOBI'S REALISM, OR HIS DOCTRINE OF ACTUALITY.

As a diligent, and generally sympathetic, student of Empiricism, Jacobi saw clearly that it tended logically to an idealism, which is called variously psychological or subjective idealism. The *a posteriori* methods of Empiricism Jacobi never called in question. Its strict individualism he considered the only philosophical position possible. For every fact, every truth, in order to be valid, must be attested by the experience of the individual. But from the standpoint of Sensationalism, what the individual knows is only his own subjective sensations and ideas. And, as Hume says, these arise "from unknown causes."

Accordingly, the problem which presented itself to the Scottish School and to Kant, and which they did not fully solve, was the same which to Jacobi also seemed the all-important problem, namely, to find some basis for our sensations and ideas, so that out of them we can construct a world of objects, sensible and supersensible. It should be recalled that Jacobi had reached the formulation of this problem largely from his study of the Scottish School, for he seems to have been no less acquainted with Reid than with Hume, and that he had the outline of his own doctrine formulated some years before Kant published the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* in 1781.

Jacobi reached somewhat the same conclusion as Reid, namely, that the existence of the external world cannot be proved by any line of reasoning based upon sensation, but must be given immediately in sensation, if at all. He thought he found an irresolvable conviction or belief, which attaches to sensation, that there is a real external world of objects which is the cause of our sensations and ideas. He held that this belief must be accepted as well founded, for only thus can philosophy make any real progress, or even get started at all. If this is not taken for granted, then all our ideas and connections are illusions, mere cobwebs of the brain, with no validity in fact, and hence of no value to us either for life or for philosophy. For unless truth be but the presentation of the true, then all is fiction, and hence delusion.

It was because Jacobi thought that the Critical Philosophy failed to meet the difficulty—did not give assurance of the world of objects

—that he found it necessary to oppose not only Kantianism, but all similar forms of idealism. These he considered to be all alike subjective. It was only after what he took to be the failure of idealism to refute Hume that Jacobi was led to make the most explicit formulations of his own views on this subject. These appear in the two criticisms of Kantianism: first, the appendix to the second edition of *David Hume über den Glauben*, written under the title, “Ueber den transcendentalen Idealismus”; and second, *Ueber das Unternehmen des Kriticismus, die Vernunft zu Verstande zu bringen*. The former, however, contains the best and most searching criticism on this particular subject, and it is also the one which best defines his own views.

It is in this sense, then, that we call Jacobi a Realist. He believed that there is an existence outside of thought, into relation with which thought must be brought. The understanding does not make nature; at least, not the understanding of the individual. To him nature is external and real, for to it the thought of the individual must conform. But, as we saw in the last chapter, his realism is not ultimate—it not finally metaphysical, but psychological. He believed that, while to the individual knower the world is opposed as a true real, it nevertheless depends upon God for its ultimate being and constitution.¹ That he did not regard himself as an ordinary realist is seen by the fact that he called his view a Real Rationalism, while that of others he called merely Nominal Rationalism. These latter, however, have given him the name of Feeling or Faith-philosopher, and, as he says, this will have to remain.²

His criticism of Idealism largely takes the form of a polemic against Kant, and becomes at times very keen and searching. He was, in fact, the first to see the tendency of the *Kritik* in this direction. This is acknowledged by critics and historians generally. “If anyone has succeeded in discovering the weaknesses which were hidden in Kant’s *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, and in the whole Critical Philosophy built thereon, then it would appear that that one is F. H. Jacobi.”³ Pfeleiderer says that Jacobi’s significance lies in his acute polemic against the one-sidedness of subjective idealism, and abstract rationalism, and in his assertion of direct experience as the ultimate source of real knowledge.⁴ In the same spirit Harms remarks: “It is the merit of Jacobi that he was the first to show the contradiction in the doctrine of Kant, by the

¹ II, pp. 273-4.

² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³ Zirngiebl, *Jacobi’s Leben, Dichten und Denken*, p. iv.

⁴ *Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. I, p. 226.

solution of which mainly German philosophy has advanced beyond the criticism of Kant.¹ Kuno Fischer says that Jacobi was the first to see that the Kantian philosophy was pure idealism, and that it could not affirm the thing-in-itself. Thence arises the realism of the thing-in-itself, not as an object of knowledge, but of faith: not a dogmatic, but a natural, immediate, necessary faith which is one with feeling.² Jacobi says that Kantianism is pure idealism. Space and time are subjective, and, as all objects are in space and time, they, too, must be merely subjective. We think of them as external, but it is only an idea of externality, not true externality. This we must say of all empirical objects. Jacobi, accordingly, says that Descartes's *Cogito ergo sum* is the standpoint of the subjective idealist. This is a universal idealism, for it has only one side, 'I,' into which all things are sunk. It is therefore a nihilism of all objectivity, and results in a system of absolute subjectivity.³

These views of the Critical Philosophy were formed by Jacobi after reading the first edition of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, and were not modified by the second edition. Jacobi thought the second edition was not an improvement, but that the first edition really expressed the logical form of Kant's doctrine, and that the famous "Refutation of Idealism" which Kant added to the second edition was aside from the system. Jacobi believed that this refutation was called forth by his own criticisms of Kant: and to make these more explicit, he added the appendix on the Critical Philosophy to the second edition of his *David Hume über den Glauben*.⁴ But that Jacobi furnished the direct occasion of the refutation is not generally conceded. The occasion is usually thought to have been the book-reviews of the *Kritik*, notably that by Garve and Feder.⁵

Jacobi says that Kant showed that the old style of philosophy could not penetrate, nor go beyond, the clouds of sensibility, and that whatever knowledge we were supposed to have beyond that sphere could not be proved to have any objective validity. In other words, Kant proved knowledge to be merely phenomenal.⁶ This philosophy, which, as we have seen, Jacobi calls nominal rationalism, can then grasp nothing certain above the world of sense. If it attempts to do so, it grasps what to it are only shadows.⁷ He thought Kant was no more successful than Hume in establishing the reality of external

¹ *Die Philosophie seit Kant*, p. 92.

² *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie* Bd. V, p. 217.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

⁴ *Cf.* II, pp. 291-2.

⁵ *Cf.* Paulsen, *Immanuel Kant*, Eng. trans., pp. 232 ff.

⁶ II, pp. 16-17.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 36.

objects. Jacobi thought that objects, according to Kant, can be nothing but subjective determinations of the spirit, mere ideas, and nothing but ideas. The empirical reality which Kant gives to objects really confers no objective reality.¹ The Kantian philosophy, therefore, abandons the spirit of its system when it speaks about objects outside us making impressions on our senses. For objects are only phenomena, and, as phenomena, are only in us.² Nor can anything be known about transcendental objects. The Ideas of Reason, at best, are but problematical, and depend entirely on our thought, and can never be the objects of experience.³

Yet the Kantian philosophy cannot get started without objects impressing the senses, for sensibility has a meaning only in reference to objects.⁴ Jacobi says the want of a real object troubled him greatly in studying Kant, for (and this is one of his fine passages) without the presupposition of objects one could not enter the Kantian system, and with that presupposition could not remain in it.⁵ We could never know anything about objects if they did exist, especially transcendental objects; nor could we ever know their relations to actual objects of experience.⁶ That the empirical objects which we know should have in reality this objective being, depends on our imagination, which is a blind power joining the before and the after. Our knowledge, then, has no objective validity, for it does not in reality refer to anything but ourselves.⁷ Even principles, then, such as Sufficient Reason, have no meaning in reference to real objects, but only in reference to phenomenal objects.⁸ It therefore reduces to this absurdity: that no objects are really outside us, not even the laws which we consider to govern our understanding. Objects and laws are all subjective, and have no objective validity.⁹ Words, then, must have a peculiar and mystical meaning, for they have been taken to imply a real objectivity. But if the Kantian philosophy were true, how could they ever have got such a meaning? Perhaps it is because in explaining phenomena we feel ourselves to be passive. But this is only half the necessary condition;¹⁰ for we must remember that causation is a principle of the transcendental,

¹ II, p. 299.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 301-2.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 304.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 306.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 308-9.

and not of the empirical understanding, and as such has no application to the world of experience. Here the whole idealistic system falls to the ground.¹

Jacobi likewise maintained that Post-Kantianism is equally subjective, and that, in fact, the half-idealism of Kant finds its logical completion only in Fichte. But Fichte's mistake is in taking the 'I' as the only real in the 'I-not-I' relation. This is the logical position, however, for a Kantian, though it is a mistake to take one as the only real, when the two are given together in inseparable union. They must both be real together.² But with such subjective idealism there can be nothing real outside us, and there can therefore be no faculty for such a non-existent. Sensibility, which should be such a medium, has no meaning. Against such subjective idealism, Jacobi opposed real objectivity, holding that things are actually present outside us, and that we know them with immediate certainty. They depend on no proof, but on faith, and faith cannot be proved. The certainty of such objects can be given only by an immediate revelation, and not by idea; for in the latter case we would be certain only of the idea, and not of the object. And this would be only idealism, not realism.³

We thus see that Jacobi did not regard thought as the one fundamental determination of all being and of all truth. All thought is an individual characteristic. All knowledge depends on being, and there is no self-consciousness where there is no self-being, *i. e.*, where there is no individual. The individual is the all. Reason is but the manifestation of that which already exists.⁴ Where unity, real individuality, ceases, there all existence ceases; and when we represent as an individual that which is no individual, we are introducing our own unity into a mere aggregate. The individual is the real. And "the indivisible in any being determines its individuality, or makes it a real whole; and all those beings whose manifold we see inseparably united in a unity, and which we can only distinguish according to this unity, are called individuals. (We may assume or not that the principle of their unity has consciousness.)"⁵

It is evident that Jacobi's starting-point was not knowledge (thought), but life. Very often he made no distinction between the two; but wherever he did, it is to be noticed that he regarded

¹ II, p. 309.

² Cf. Pfeleiderer, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 226-7, and Pünjer, *op. cit.*, p. 631.

³ Cf. K. Fischer, *op. cit.*, Bd. V, pp. 222, 223, 225.

⁴ Cf. Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3.

⁵ II, p. 209.

life as the fundamental, while thought is but a reflection of that life which is the primary real. The living thing is primary, and possesses the thought, which latter to Jacobi is a *Nachsinnen*. Before anything can have being for another, *i. e.*, before it can be thought, it must first have being for itself, *i. e.*, life.¹ Such an individual (a self-determining one) must be something in and for itself, else it would never be anything for another, nor be able to receive this or that chance determination. It must exert power in and for itself, else it were impossible that any result should arise through it, or even appear in it.² And just as is life, so is consciousness or knowledge. The latter is always a function of the former. "Life and consciousness are one. The higher degree of consciousness depends on the greater number and nature of the perceptions united in consciousness. Every perception expresses at the same time something external and something internal, both in relation to each other. Every perception is consequently in itself a concept. As the action, so the reaction. If the power of receiving impressions is so manifold and complete that an articulate echo rises in consciousness, then there arises above the impression the Word. There appears what we call Reason, what we call Person."³

Jacobi was not, of course, a crass realist or materialist, but rather a dualist with a spiritualistic tendency. He regarded objects as real, but not so real as spirits. It is not thought and things which are the terms of his dualism, but spirit and objects. Thought is but the internal determination of spirit, and as such belongs only to spirits. It is the activity of spirit. It is the thinker that is real, while the thought is but one of his activities. "What is body? What is organic body? All nothing, all a shadow and without a trace of actual being, were not form first given to it through substance, through a world of spirits; did we not start from the pure simplicity of life. Therefore, every system, even the smallest, . . . demands a spirit which shall unite, move, and bind together,—a Lord and King of life. And the system of all systems, the all of being, is moved and held together—by nothing?—Would it then be unified?—If then it is unified, it must be unified through some real thing, and nothing has such reality but spirit."⁴ This realism, then, is not materialistic, but spiritualistic. Spirit is the only principle of unity. Yet Jacobi did not undertake to reduce body to spirit in any thorough-going way, but at times even seems to give it an inde-

¹ Cf. Wilde, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

² II, p. 244.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 263. Cf. Wilde, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁴ II, pp. 273-4.

pendent reality. At other times, however, he made it less real than spirit; and it was always to him less important.

It must be borne in mind that Jacobi is not seeking a basis for knowledge, but for being. It is not so much knowledge as being that needs to be explained, for knowledge is always but an activity of the real spiritual being. It is being, existence, that demands explanation. Being is to him the one mysterious fact,—the one fact he endeavors to understand. Its relation to thought is not the great problem, for he always assumes the ultimate identity of the two. Ideas exist only in the mind of a living being. "It is the office of the senses to receive and transmit impressions. To transmit to whom? Where does this accumulation of impressions occur? And what would be accomplished with such a mere accumulation? Plurality, relation, are *living conceptions* which presuppose a living being that can *actively* receive the manifold into its own unity."¹ For him, then, reality does not so much belong to objects as to spirits. Hegel gave him credit for having worked free from the current conception that the ultimate is 'substance,' to the more adequate conception that the ultimate is 'spirit.'²

Jacobi may be termed a psychological realist; for what he found in psychology he took as real and true, and as having not only subjective but also objective validity. He no more questioned its objective validity than he did its subjective.³ In perception he thought we have both the idea and the object. "In the first and simplest perception there must be the 'I' and the 'thou,' inner consciousness and external object existing together in the soul: both in the same indivisible moment, without before or after, without any operation of the understanding, nay, even without in the slightest degree beginning the production of the concept of cause and effect."⁴ In the same strain he says: "The decided realist, who upon the evidence of his senses unhesitatingly accepts external objects, considers this certainty as an original conviction, and cannot think otherwise than that upon this fundamental experience, all our speculation as to an outer world must rest,—how shall such a decided realist name the means through which he obtains his certainty of external objects, as of existence independent of his own ideas of them? He has nothing on which his judgment can rest, except the things themselves,—nothing but the fact that objects stand there, actually before him.

¹ II, pp. 271-2.

² *Werke*, Bd. XVII, p. 9.

³ II, p. 141.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

In these circumstances, can he express himself by a more appropriate term than revelation (*Offenbarung*)?"¹

For Jacobi, then, the object was not constituted in any of its determinations by individual thought, nor is its existence to be proved by that thought. Thought only discovers the object, and itself must conform to what it finds. He could not understand the idealistic position, for to him thought is always the thought of the empirical subject. His view is always psychological, and but seldom if ever rises beyond that to the ontological. His thought remained, therefore, dualistic, quite as much as realistic. Objects stand over against subjects; and though the subject is of the greater importance, yet in knowledge it must conform to the object in a way which is not required of the object in reference to the subject. He was aware, however, that this is but the psychological or epistemological aspect of the case; and there is everywhere in his writings the ontological assumption that nature is only finite, and that spirit alone is infinite.²

In a similar way Jacobi treated the Categories of the Understanding. These he took as not merely determinations of the subject, but as first of all determinations of the object. The laws of the understanding rest upon nature, and what is not natural cannot be thinkable, or what is not in nature cannot be in idea.³ He did not deny that there are *a priori* elements in knowledge, but only that there can be any knowledge purely *a priori*, i. e., in the sense of being before and independent of all experience. He seems to accept the chief Kantian Categories, such as Reality, Substance or Individuality, Causality, etc. All these, he says, have objective validity.⁴ An *a priori* concept, however, is one whose "object as an absolutely universal predicate is so given in all single things, that the idea of this predicate must be common to all finite things given with reason, and must lie at the basis of every experience."⁵

It is evident that Jacobi believed in a knowledge that may properly be called *a priori*, though, as we have seen, not in the Kantian sense of being independent of all experience. To Jacobi *a priori* meant that element of knowledge which the mind itself furnishes. But this element enters only into concrete experience. "The material of the *a priori* concepts is given in the immediate perception."⁶

¹ II, pp. 165-6.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 208-9.

³ Cf. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁴ II, pp. 214-5. Cf. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, pp. 163 ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁶ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 165. Cf. Jacobi, II, pp. 213-215.

Again, "the *a priori* concepts rest, as generally all knowledge, upon the Positive, *i. e.*, upon Faith and Revelation."¹ It would thus appear that to Jacobi the *a priori* elements are quite necessary to knowledge. But, as we have seen, he made a real advance upon Kant in holding that the *a priori* part of knowledge is an element *in* knowledge, and indeed in all knowledge, rather than a part of our knowledge which is independent of experience. To Jacobi, any knowledge whatever depends not only on the universal element, but just as much upon the particular.² The universal principles are but the essential *forms* of our thought, to which every particular idea or judgment must conform in order to be taken into the universal or transcendental consciousness.³ They are not, however, merely subjective forms to which the objective reality must conform, but are themselves also really objective.⁴ Thus Jacobi saw what Kant did not see, that unless these forms are also objective, external nature cannot really be presented under them, and hence can have no meaning for the subject. Hume had denied the objective validity of these principles, and had said that they were merely illusions of the subject; Kant had affirmed their subjective validity, and considered that, therefore, the understanding could order nature according to them; but Jacobi saw that in order that there may be a union of subject and object in the process of knowledge, these principles must be both subjective and objective.⁵

This shows us, then, the nature of Jacobi's realism. The object is just as real as the subject in the actual experience of the individual. The object as well as the subject must be the bearer of these principles which enter into knowledge. The real is the actual, that is, that which has both internal and external existence, that which is both thought and being. Every truth is but the reflection of the true; every conception of beauty and goodness, but the reflection of the beautiful and the good. And only in intuition can these be known. Whatever is given in intuition, then, is true. This conception Jacobi had from early life, for he says that always a demonstration which did not give an intuition of the actual meant but little to him. Therefore, he says, he was blind and insensible.⁶ The real, then, is given in perception rather than in thought or in ratiocination. Perception is real because it gives both thought and

¹ II, pp. 213-215.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 304-5. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 306-7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 300; also pp. 215-7.

⁵ Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁶ II, p. 178.

being.¹ Thus there is reached through the sensibility a reality which the understanding by means of its faculty of imagination cannot reach. Conception cannot give objectivity; this is found only in perception, where alone actuality is given.² In the same way, reason (faith) as a form of perception creates no concepts, builds no system, passes no judgments, but, like the external sense, merely reveals, and positively makes known.³

Jacobi thus endeavored to keep idea and object together from the outset. Ideas in consciousness and objective truth are given in the same moment. For no sooner is a separation made between the two, than an insoluble problem is given to philosophy. Jacobi well knew this Achilles's heel of philosophy, and that it left all our knowledge merely ideas. There, then, began his '*salto mortale*.' Either our knowledge is mere consciousness, and mere changes of consciousness, and all our ideas, 'I' not less than 'not-I,' are mere images or projections of our own consciousness, or all our knowledge is, in point of existence, a subjectively absolute identity of the real and the ideal, and is a certainty of both objective reality and subjective being. The first is absurd, and the latter is, therefore, declared to be the true conception. He accordingly says that he experiences not only that he himself is, but that objects exist outside him, in the same indivisible moment.⁴ The '*salto mortale*' is seen to be, then, the bold leap from the subjectivity of the old systems, or that of idealism which finds truth only in ideas, to that form of philosophy which finds that the truth in fact and the true in reality are one and the same thing. It is a leap from the subjectivity of the idea to that reality which combines the subjectivity and the objectivity in the one fact of perception.

But while Jacobi avoided the error of saying that knowledge consists in the correspondence of our ideas with the objects (a process which it would take another idea to determine, and so on *ad infinitum*), he did, however, fall into the equally serious error of limiting our knowledge to what we can directly perceive. This led him into the difficulty of seeming to deny to the understanding even the faculty of elaboration which he had already ascribed to it. For if all knowledge is in intuition, then all the ideas produced by the understanding must be but cobwebs of the brain. Before such a criterion of truth all laws and all principles both of science and of

¹ II, p. 263.

² *Ibid.*, p. 232.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴ Cf. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

⁵ II, pp. 174-5.

philosophy must vanish; and even the categories of the understanding, which, as we have seen, Jacobi was ready to accept, must be taken as fictions. For Hume is not the only one who would say that he was never able *to perceive* cause and effect (causality), or any other such relation. But this difficulty Jacobi did not seem to recognize fully, for he has not even given it a formal discussion.

Another argument against the idealists comes to light at this point. Jacobi wished to take them also on their own ground; and from this standpoint he tried to show the insufficiency of the idealistic position, and at the same time the inconsistencies of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. He insisted that we must consider every conception as having a valid origin somewhere—a father as well as a mother. As words rest on conceptions, so conceptions rest on perceptions of either the outer or the inner sense.¹ Materialism and Idealism are, therefore, both one-sided. He commended Fichte, and seems to have regarded him for a time as the true Messiah of speculative reason, who showed the two principles, the 'I' and the 'not-I,' which are alternately denied by materialism and by idealism.² In this connection he says that dualism is the only possible philosophy, although from the ontological standpoint he seems to believe that materialism must find its final explanation in spiritualism. He knew of no kind of idealism but subjective idealism, which he regarded as too highly speculative for a philosophy; for it involved, to his way of thinking, a sinking of all objectivity into the abyss of the ego. Accordingly, he criticised the monism of Spinoza, in which thought and extension are united in an unknowable and unintuitable substance, which can be reached only speculatively, and hence can have no philosophical value.³

He further argued against the idealists on much the same line as Kant in his "Refutation of Idealism," though he showed that this line of argument could mean but little from Kant's point of view. He understood the true to be something which first gives value to knowing and the faculty of knowing.⁴ "Perception presupposes the perceivable, reason presupposes the true; it is the faculty of the presupposition of the true. A reason which does not presuppose the true is nothing."⁵ He thought there is something in man which opposes an absolutely subjective doctrine, a complete idealism;

¹ II, pp. 218-9.

² III, p. 9.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁵ *Ibid.*

though some seem to be satisfied (and here he refers especially to Kant) if only the name of objects remains.¹

It is in criticism that Jacobi's real strength appears, and he has devoted especial care to an examination of Kant's *Kritik*. To Kant, Space and Time are not consciously in the mind without or before all objects; and, therefore, on his own theory they are not mere *forms* of intuition, but are intuitions.² Such an *a priori* view of time as Kant supposes is impossible, for it would be empty and immovable, whereas the time we know changes and moves. The time which Kant conceives would be like the infinite sea, whose waves, however, would belong to some particular time, which would not be the *a priori* time.³ Again, space is to Kant an idea, and hence cannot be conceived as an origin of ideas or concepts. The *a priori* space idea is unthinkable, for it is a space with no objects, no corporeal nature, but only pure space. That is, in thinking Kant's *a priori* space, mind must think a thought which has no content.⁴ And as space is an idea, bodies in space can be only ideas, and hence can have no essential externality, though they may have associated with them the further 'idea' of externality. Nor is the remainder of the *Kritik* any less idealistic. For as reason does not give objects, the only objects given to the understanding will be those given by sensibility.⁵ Both reason and understanding, therefore, depend upon sensibility for their objects. But as space and time are forms of sensibility and not of objects, there can be no spatial and temporal objects. Even the objects of sensibility, then, are reduced to ghosts, —mere appearances of nothing that appears.⁶ This leaves but a problematical object, and therefore a problematical subject; for the subject also will have no ground of existence.⁷ The manifoldness and unity of which Kant speaks are then only 'substantial forms' of thought and being, and give no genuine reality.⁸

Again, the three *a priori* unities, space, time, and consciousness, are thereby infinite. How, then, can they ever become finite, *i. e.*, how can they become particular spaces, times, and consciousnesses?⁹ These likewise do not lend themselves to an idealistic system, for they are three independent concepts, and therefore cannot be reduced to one. Idealism would require all to be merged into con-

¹ II, pp. 76-7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 78.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 137-8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-1.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

sciousness; but space and time cannot be so reduced.¹ Moreover, they are three identities, and do not give objects till the understanding acts on them, i. e., they require a fourth unity which is not forthcoming.² Reason also rests on understanding, while understanding rests on imagination, and imagination on sense, and sense seems in turn to rest again on imagination. But what does the imagination rest on? It is like the old story of the world resting on the elephant, and the elephant resting on the tortoise, and so on. So the whole is created by the imagination, which is the true tortoise. The difficulty is to get the imagination started.³

Jacobi, however, in his desire to correct the subjectivity of Kant's theory, made the common mistake of going too far in the other direction. Not being satisfied to say that Space and Time must be more than mere thought-forms, he insisted that they are forms of objects as well as forms of thought. In this way, from the idealism of Kant he swung over to an apparent realism. He has thus helped us to see that Space and Time must be conceived as reciprocally objective and subjective, so far as the individual is concerned. But the ontological problem goes deeper, and demands the explanation of one sphere in terms of the other, in which case idealism seems to be the only line of possibility, though the last word has not been spoken, and the final theory is still to be given.

We can readily see from this that Jacobi's realism is not a crude realism, and much less is it a form of materialism. In the last analysis he must prove to be rather an idealist, as we now understand idealism. For he regarded spirit as that by which and for which all objects exist, and further maintained that the world is rational throughout, though not in the sense of reason as a form of understanding. He is, therefore, no more a realist than is anyone who does not hold to subjective idealism.⁴ He is not so much of a realist as Spinoza; for, as Hegel says, it is Jacobi's merit to have seen that the Absolute is not Substance, but Spirit.⁵ Nor is he more of a realist than Kant, for whatever be the logical form of the Critical Philosophy, it is evident that Kant did not mean to deny reality to objects. But Jacobi did not comprehend Kant's philosophical method, and so was forever unable to see anything but the letter of Kant's treatment of his problems. He did not allow

¹ II, pp. 134-5.

² *Ibid.*, p. 161.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 115, 116, 117.

⁴ Hegel, *Werke*, Bd. XVII, p. 9.

⁵ It is a mistake to regard him, as Professor Wilde apparently does, as a typical realist. His work is really a contribution to the development of German Idealism; for idealism better expresses his deepest thought.

for the mechanical and dogmatic character of Kant's training, and hence of his thought and expression.

As we have already pointed out, Jacobi, in common with his age, applied the word 'Idealism' only to that type of philosophy which we now call subjective idealism. To this he was opposed, but not more so than was Kant. From our present standpoint, this would be nihilism rather than idealism; for not only would it compel a denial of all objects outside the thinking self, but this self would, moreover, be swept away. Nothing would be left but the psychological content of the mind, with no mind of which it was the content. This method of reducing matter to mental content would be but little better, logically, than the opposite method of reducing mind to matter. The one would be a bare idealism, and the other a blank materialism.

A true idealism would rather hold that the universe is an all-embracing system of thought-relations, *i. e.*, relations which may be thought to their inmost centre, relations which submit themselves to the complete penetration of thought. This means that all the parts of the universe are so interrelated that their entire significance is seen only in all the parts, *i. e.*, in their relations to the whole. No part is itself only, but each has its being also in every other part. The universe is then rational through and through, and its meaning is entirely interpretable in terms of thought. All objects and all persons have their meaning in reference to all other objects and persons. Everything is active, and must function in reference to all other things. The meaning of each will be seen in its function. What it does will let us into the secret of what it is, and its functional significance will be but another name for its nature. All parts and all objects and all persons, then, become ideal, *i. e.*, they have a significance for thought, and hence for being.

It may be said that this was the very doctrine that Jacobi denied. This, I think, is a misunderstanding. When he denied that all reality could be thought, he had in mind only the limiting finite thought of the understanding, which, as he conceived it, was but a faculty of inferences and phenomena. And though he said at first that the infinite was known only to feeling, he came later to see that this really is not different from thought in its highest manifestations, and so adopted the word 'reason' to denote this activity of the self. But he was not sufficiently original as a thinker to develop an idealism, though probably idealism more fully expresses his deepest convictions than any form of realism could do. Not that he can properly be called an idealist. His philosophy remains formally a realism. But his affinities are rather with spiritualistic idealism than with any thorough-going realism.

CHAPTER V.

JACOBI'S METAPHYSICS: HIS THEISM AND PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

It was in fundamental metaphysical and religious subjects that Jacobi found his chief interest. These furnished the motives that made him a philosopher at all. Other phases of his doctrine were developed merely to enable him to gain a comprehension of these matters, and to enable him to set them forth in what he considered the true light. It might be said of him as of Spinoza that he was a *gottgetrunkener Mann*. The problems of Theism and of Religion he deemed the only subjects of pure metaphysical inquiry. And these were the subjects which occupied his chief thought.

Jacobi saw as clearly as anyone the failure of the old dogmatic metaphysics of Theism; and he made it his life-long endeavor to contribute to a more adequate view, to one which would have significance for both philosophy and religion. The old philosophy or theology, as Hegel truly says, concerned itself with "the notion of God, or God as a possible being, the proofs of his existence, and his properties."¹ Its purpose, then, was to find out what predicates could be applied to God; and its result was "the lifeless product of modern Deism."² The method of demonstration required the statement of some objective ground of the being of God, who would then appear to be derived from something else. There is in this method no possible passage from the finite to the infinite. God, for such a system, becomes either the totality of the finite, which is Pantheism, or the essence of subjectivity set over against objectivity, which is Dualism. On this level it was likewise impossible to give any account of the attributes of God; for he was conceived as pure reality, as indeterminate being. He was, however, given certain properties which were conceived to grow out of his relation to the world. These were, therefore, external, and an enumeration could be given only *ab extra*. But it will be noticed that this method involves the assumption of a starting-point, and the deduction of other truths from this. This form of theology, then, started with a 'given,' and by deducing God therefrom really made him depend upon other terms than himself. This reverses the result aimed at;

¹ Wallace, *The Logic of Hegel*, pp. 71-72.

² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

for instead of making God the ground of all things, it really makes him dependent upon all else.¹

This was the Theism and the Demonstration against which Jacobi framed his philosophical doctrines. He felt no less strongly than Hegel, though he saw less clearly, that this sort of doctrine was inadequate to either philosophy or religion. It had no philosophical value, for the reasoning was manifestly unsound; and it had no religious value, for such a conception of God lacked all content, and could, accordingly, have no meaning for the heart and conscience. Jacobi's criticisms of this sort of philosophy are keen and penetrating. His line of argument proceeded by an examination of the leading philosophers from Descartes to Schelling, and we cannot do better than follow his own method in our exposition. From this we may gather together finally his principal doctrines.

Jacobi remarks that Descartes did not follow absolutely the demonstrative method of reasoning, which is usually thought to be his only philosophical method. On the contrary, Descartes started from an assumed principle, or intuition 'I think,' and an innate (intuitive) idea of God. Upon this he began to build his system. Not feeling entirely satisfied with the latter principle, he set about also to *prove* the objective being of God, evidently thinking that in reference to the Divine Being mediation was better than immediacy. But this appeared to Jacobi to be the weakness of Cartesianism. For it made the conception of God depend on other concepts *ad infinitum*. God can be known only immediately, and any attempted demonstration must be not only misleading but positively false. That essence whose being needs to be proved is not God, and any such method of proof is therefore but a form of atheism. Thus, proceeding from human knowledge, we make God dependent upon the 'I,' which sets itself upon the throne, and makes God dependent upon itself.²

To Spinozism Jacobi devoted more of his attention, for he considered it the greatest foe of Theism. He regarded Spinozism as the phoenix which arose out of the ashes of Cartesianism, and which became the complete Cartesianism. Descartes had treated the *being* of God as a property which proceeds from thought, *i. e.*, he had derived the being from the thought, after he had earlier derived the thought from the being. Spinoza, then, drew but the inevitable conclusion that thought and being are ultimately one.³ He did not,

¹ Cf., *loc. cit. et passim*.

² Kuhn, *Jacobi und die Philos. seiner Zeit*, pp. 82-3.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

however, attempt to resolve the dualism in finite existence, but left mind and matter independent for experience, postulating their unity in an ultimate substance, thus getting rid of the absurd idea of a chaos. He also abandoned the idea of a development of thought and extension from one substance,¹ considering the two as eternally distinct, though logically united in the one eternal substance.

But a natural explanation of the being of finite and successive things can as little be given on his theory as on the older. For he must posit an eternal time, as infinite finiteness, though he tries to say that the absurdity of this is only in the imagination and not in the reason.² He had, therefore, to choose between a Being and a Becoming; and he chose the Being.³ His universe became static, and he so conceived it as to deny not so much God as the world.⁴ He resolved the finite world into God by making the infinite universe itself God. As Hegel remarks in the same connection, Spinoza is not so much an atheist as an acosmist.⁵

Though Jacobi regarded this identity of thought and extension as invalid because not intuitable, he nevertheless commended Spinoza for setting forth, as needing no proof, the double principle that the thinking essence can as little be a result or modification of the extended essence, as *vice versa*. Accordingly, the extended essence cannot be considered as the stuff to which the thinking essence imparts form, as with Plato to whom the soul is the cause and in general the first. To Spinoza, on the other hand, the extended essence is the objective or formal being, the proper real; and the thinking essence is only that which in a measure thinks the real being; for conceptions are but reflexes of things. Spinozism, therefore, is materialistic; for it allows the thinking essence to think only of the material, extended essence.⁶ Accordingly, Jacobi says, that in spite of his professed opposition of thought and extension, Spinoza leaves mind merely mechanical, and the universe atheistic.⁷

Spinoza's initial difficulty is in passing from the finite to the infinite. Starting from the standpoint of human knowledge, he cannot find his way to the infinite; or, starting with the infinite, he cannot reach the finite. The all-inclusive God and finite individuals are contradictory; there is no passage from the one to the other.

¹ *Werke*, IV, b, p. 133.

² *Ibid.*, p. 136.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁴ IV, a, p. xxxiv.

⁵ Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

⁶ III, pp. 430-431.

⁷ IV, b, p. 134. Cf. John Caird, *Spinoza* (Blackwood's Philosophical Classics), pp. 262 ff.

Having individuals, *i. e.*, admitting human knowledge, there is no way by which we can rise to God.¹ But beginning with God, we cannot ascribe consciousness to him, in Spinoza's system, any more than we can ascribe to him bodily movements and forms and colors.² "The infinite cause has explicitly neither understanding nor will, because on account of its transcendental unity and completely absolute infinity it can have no object of thought and of will."³ And though Spinoza thinks of the first cause as having thoughts but no understanding, he must regard these not as particular thoughts, but as the 'original stuff' of thought.⁴ Thought or understanding cannot be posited of God, for thought is always a certain determinate form, a modification of absolute thinking. Moreover, all the various forms of thought are mediate, and, therefore, cannot be referred to the infinite nature.⁵ Substance, then, as infinite has no understanding, and likewise can have no will. Its relation to the process of the world cannot be that of an intelligence to its object, but merely that of a mechanical whole to its parts.

The points to be especially noticed in Jacobi's criticism are that he considered Spinozism to be atheism, its universe a mechanism, and its geometrical method invalid for philosophy. Faith is the only philosophical method, and is in no way a demonstrative principle, but a substitute for demonstration, which latter is applicable only to the mechanical sciences of nature.

Jacobi thought that a purely mechanical universe is not only atheistic, but that it is a self-contradictory conception. For if it be absurd to regard anything as absolutely independent, it is likewise absurd to regard anything as absolutely dependent. The latter would mean that the world was an absolute passivity; and hence could account for nothing, as things would have no properties whatever. If complete independence is unthinkable, complete dependence is equally so. Mechanism, in order to exist at all, must be but accidental and not constitutive of things, and must rest finally on self-activity.⁶ When we think of the world-ground as intelligent and self-existing, we have not so difficult a conception, as when we try to think of the universe as a self-originating mechanism.⁷ This latter, to Jacobi, appeared to be an absurdity.

¹ IV, b, p. 101.

² *Ibid.*, p. 91.

³ IV, a, p. 105.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁵ IV, b, p. 88.

⁶ IV, a, p. 25.

⁷ IV, b, pp. 147-148.

In order that providence, freedom, and other such human characteristics may be in the world, Jacobi thought they must exist first in the Author of the world. Otherwise we should have blind providence, free necessity, etc.¹ The world-ground must therefore be intelligent, and hence a personality. For unity of consciousness constitutes personality, and every being which in itself exists and knows itself as 'I' is a person. God therefore must be a person; and, as the completest and highest intelligence, he must be the highest personality. Only in this way can we ascribe intelligence to the world-ground at all. We cannot think of intelligence apart from an intelligent being. The opponents of this view seem to speak of the world-ground as intelligence without personality. But, says Jacobi, unless intelligence means an intelligent being, it means nothing whatever.² The world-ground must be able to distinguish itself from the world of objects, in order that such a world-ground may have any meaning for our knowledge, or be in itself anything different from the world as a whole. "God distinguishes himself from all things in the most complete way, and must possess the highest personality and the only pure reason."³ But God does not therefore have human faculties. "He, the all-sufficient, needs no organs. He is properly complete being in itself, and knowing in itself; the pure, highest understanding, the pure, almighty will."⁴

When we come to Kant, we find that Jacobi regarded his theism as more nearly adequate, though not entirely satisfactory. He conceived the negative side of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* to be necessary from the standpoint of science, in order that we might reach an adequate theism in the field of religion. Jacobi therefore thought the theoretical part of the *Kritik* to be directed against a self-deceiving rationalism; and that its great merit was in thus destroying the false, and thereby leaving a place for a true rationalism. Kant's sound sense led him to see that this would be transformed into an abyss unless a God were found to prevent it.⁵ Transcendental philosophy is not, and has no right to be either theistic or atheistic, any more than geometry or any other branch of science or mathematics. And so Kant's philosophy is neither.⁶ "That it knows nothing of God constitutes no reproach to the transcendental philosophy, where it is always recognized that God cannot be known but only believed

¹ II, p. 114.

² IV, b, p. 78.

³ II, p. 264.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁶ III, p. 6.

in. A God who could be known would be no God."¹ This interpretation of Kant, which regards him as conceiving supersensible truths to be undemonstrable, is the view to which Jacobi adhered throughout his whole career.²

But, on the other hand, neither can the understanding deny the objective validity of the Ideas of Reason. These are to it entirely foreign. If it were to deny them because they are objects of reason, it would also be compelled to deny the objects of sense, for both alike are forms of perception. Then there would be nothing left of objective theism or of nature, but only a formless content of images without objective validity or meaning.³ Kant, however, goes on to show how the theoretical reason depends upon the practical reason, and how the practical must be assumed to be true; for this is rendered necessary in order to account for the facts of the moral experience. This acceptance of the practical reason he calls 'rational faith.' In this way Kant thought he had superseded both Dogmatism and Skepticism by the Critical Philosophy.⁴ In the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, therefore, he subordinates the reason to the understanding, making it a mere hand-maid. While in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, on the other hand, he exalts it to a supremacy above the understanding.⁵ Thus Kant's doctrine appears different from different points of view. As a philosopher in the Pure Reason, he denies the possibility of knowing God, etc.; while as a moral being in the Practical Reason, he has room for a rational faith. The ethics undoubtedly represents what he regards as the higher and more ultimate point of view.⁶ To the pure reason, then, these ideas must remain only fictions, having no reality whatever; while to the the understanding they do not exist at all.⁷ To the pure reason they have no constitutive but only regulative function, and, therefore, no possible ground in experience.⁸ Only in the practical reason do they attain to the position of experiences. There they are no longer fictions, but are matters of immediate faith and perception. In this sphere, as Kant sees, the phenomena of the moral consciousness cannot exist without the reality of the Ideas of Reason; and reason itself cannot exist if its ideas are but cobwebs of the brain.⁹

¹ III, p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 340.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 371-2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 345.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 364-5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 369-70.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 101-2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 362.

Here Kant thinks there is in the human reason, as the law of its truth, an immediate knowledge both of nature as the real in general, and of its ground which is God.¹

But neither can the Ideas of Reason be proved: for proof depends upon something outside of that to be proved. It is a process of reference, as in geometry, where one thing is proved by reference to another. So if we wish a proof of the being of God, it can be given only by showing something outside of him and upon which he depends.² As this is manifestly impossible, no proof of God is possible at all. It is this that Jacobi means when he says that God is known not by a conclusion but by an intuition;³ and that a God who could be proved would be no God.⁴

It would be well to recall at this point what we have previously said regarding Jacobi's view of demonstration.⁵ He never abandoned the conception that demonstration moved in an identity, that it was only deduction or induction, and therefore never got beyond the field in which it started. That is, he always conceived demonstration to be analytic rather than synthetic. He accordingly never saw the significance of Kant's method, and that it was the very method he wanted but failed to find. But it is scarcely to be wondered at that he did not fully grasp its meaning, when Kant himself did not see its full significance, nor the universality of its possible application.

Jacobi strongly approved Kant's insistence upon the personality of God, and commended him for the fact that to him the term 'God' meant what it had always meant.⁶ In this respect Jacobi contrasted him with the post-Kantians, especially Fichte and Schelling. He thought these,—particularly Schelling, against whom he directed his last work, *Von göttlichen Dingen*.—made nature God, and thereby robbed God of any personal or even spiritual nature.

We have now seen Jacobi's view of the problem and the development of modern philosophy. This was to find a place for reality, both objective and subjective,—the worlds of sensible and supersensible existence. Descartes had assumed the reality of the subject. Spinoza had ended by attributing pure objectivity to extended essence. This Malebranche, Leibniz, and Berkeley had tended to reduce to mere subjectivity, till a more incisive thinker (Hume)

¹ III, p. 363.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 367-8.

³ II, p. 284.

⁴ III, p. 7.

⁵ *Supra*, pp. 10-11.

⁶ III, p. 341.

suggested the same concerning the thinking essence. Thus the *cogito* of Descartes alone remained; the *ergo* was not expressed; and the *sum* was lost, and with it all reality in general. It was at this point that Kant undertook to reconstruct philosophy and to restore reality. We have seen that Jacobi regarded the attempted restoration of the sensible world as a complete failure; and he was not entirely satisfied with Kant's treatment of the supersensible. But he was still more in doubt, when he saw the development to Fichte and Schelling, though he did not think they represented the true Kantianism in regard to the supersensible. He thought that Fichte represented the logical result of the subjectivism of Kant, and that his denial of God was due to this relationship. However, he says that though he should call Fichte's system atheism, yet the atheism is, like Spinoza's, purely speculative, and denies the name but not the being of God, while the truth is really in their souls.¹

Jacobi's criticisms of the philosophy of Schelling will demand a fuller treatment, for the questions there raised are more fundamental to his metaphysics. They concern the question of the possibility of a natural explanation of the universe and of man. In his opposition to Schelling, then, it will be possible to find Jacobi's own views of man, the world, and God.

The philosophy of Schelling appeared to Jacobi to deny the personality of God, and, in fact, to make nature God. This results in a kind of Naturalism which necessarily denies not only God, but all things spiritual. It will not help the matter to call the original Reason, and regard it as blind, and then call it the Absolute, and identify it with necessity; for this would only show reason to be irrational.² This philosophy denies all the characteristics of reason, and yet wants to have its principle called rational. But a power above which there is no other, and in which knowledge, wisdom, and goodness do not prevail, is blind fate; and it does not make it mean anything to call it Absolute Reason. Reason is only where there is providence; and where that is lacking, reason is lacking.³

If one begins, as Schelling does, with an unconscious principle, Jacobi maintains it is impossible to see how consciousness could ever be developed in the process of an unconscious world. That which is now must have been in the beginning, and the original power of the universe must have contained in itself all that which now exists. "He that hath made the eye, shall he not see?"⁴ The thought of

¹ III, pp. 46-47.

² II, p. 49.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

such a blind universe gradually developing itself from all eternity, and at last producing mind, is to Jacobi completely absurd.¹ If providence and freedom did not exist in the beginning, then they do not exist now; and the God of Socrates and Plato, and of Christ, is but a fairy tale.² "If reason can exist only in a person, and the world must have a rational author, mover, and ruler, then must this essence be a personal essence. Such an essence we can conceive only under the form of human rationality and personality, and the characteristics which I recognize in man as the highest, viz., Love, Self-Consciousness, Understanding, Free-Will, I must attribute to him. . . . This decisive assertion Feeling makes for the religious faith." Again, "As this consciousness is the same as the conviction that intelligence is the only self-activity, that it is the highest, yea, the only power truly known by us, so it teaches faith in a first all-highest intelligence, in a rational author and law-giver of nature, in a single God who is spirit."⁴

But finite reason cannot develop from irrational nature. Either reason is of nature and is only the complete development of sensibility, or it is of God and is spirit.⁵ Jacobi held that reason is spirit, and is entirely different from sensibility, which may be a power of nature. He says Aristotle has made it clear that there are only two kinds of philosophers, those who conceive that the more complete proceeds from the less complete, and those who conceive the most complete to be first.⁶ The one makes it necessary to think that a purposeless mechanism produces goodness, beauty, and truth; while the other finds these in God, and the universe becomes their embodiment. Shall we then say that the universe arose from self-independent mechanism without cause or end; or does it pursue the good and beautiful,—is it the work of providence, the creation of God? The latter alone is theism, and was the natural faith of the world before philosophical science arose. Naturalism arose only with speculation.

It may be answered that nature is not taken as the mere content of all being, but as that which brings forth,—the absolute productivity itself, the subjectless and objectless productivity with is unconditioned either from the front or rear (before or after, a *parte ante*, a *parte post*); that it is *not* in any way the things produced—

¹ II, p. 118.

² *Ibid.*, p. 123.

³ IV, a, pp. xlv-xlvi.

⁴ *Ibid.*, a, pp. 32-33.

⁵ III, p. 378.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

the infinity of single essence—or the content of all being; but merely the properly eternal and unchangeable being, the being of the absolute productivity. This holy, eternal, creating, power of the world which produces all things from itself, and efficaciously brings forth,—this is the only true and living God. The God of theism, on the contrary, is only an insipid idol, a cobweb of the brain, dishonoring to the reason.

In reply Jacobi asks concerning the works of this God: Are not these changes merely one and the same with himself, or only present in him; or are they also outside of him? If they are only in him, then are they mere changes, modifications of himself; and there is, in truth, nothing created except *time*. Thus, when we identify God with nature or the universe, we say that God is eternally the same in quality and quantity. It would, therefore, be impossible that there should be any change, unless he himself were the changeability, the temporalness, the reciprocity itself. It may, indeed, be urged that this changeableness is in its root an unchangeable,—the holy, eternal, creating power of the world, only in its fruit explicitly changeable, so that at any moment the all of the essence does not exist. Accordingly, it would be undeniable that the creative word which the naturalistic God expresses from eternity becomes nothing. He calls forth non-being out of being, as the God of theism calls forth being out of non-being.¹

“And so we are compelled to conclude, without going further, that the manifest nothing is that which alone is true, or to admit the view as unacceptable that nature is all and that there is nothing outside of and above it. For so much is clear to every unprejudiced person, that if nature is nothing other than the holy, eternal, creating, original, power of the world, which produces and brings forth actively all things from itself, then the world, with all that it is at any moment of its actual explicit being, is nothing; that then the cause which brings forth the world that from eternity to eternity passes over from one form to another form of nothing, must itself be nothing in the same measure, as its effect is nothing. The entire essence of this cause is, indeed, nothing other than its effect; and it completes in every moment all that it is able to complete,—its to-day is not more complete than its yesterday, and its to-morrow is not more complete than its to-day. It, therefore, in truth brings forth nothing, but makes only an eternal change in itself, that is, as we have already seen, it gives birth eternally to time. To create this in an incessant reciprocity, this is all its life, and the entire content of its life. Only thereby does it live and do

¹ III, pp. 390–392.

all things which it does ; it has no higher aim, no content of life."¹

All this seems to mean that it is Jacobi's opinion that the naturalists' world cannot be a developing world, inasmuch as it really cannot produce anything above the dead-level of mechanical movement. This would not be a true development, but only an eternal change, with no more in the effect than in the cause. Naturalism, therefore, cannot account for anything above mechanism, cannot speak of God, of divine things, of freedom, of moral good or evil, or of proper morality ; for these would demand a true development rather than a mere change.

Even less could there be said to arise any consciousness which could in any way be called absolute ; nor could such a beginning even give rise to a finite consciousness. It would, indeed, be nothing but a form of materialism ; for since it starts with only mechanical nature, it is obliged to explain all things in terms of mechanism. And as Jacobi has shown, knowledge and morality both imply principles which are not natural (mechanical), which cannot be given a naturalistic origin, and whose operations cannot be explained as naturalistic processes. Nature is non-rational as knowledge is non-natural. This shows a faculty in man which is above nature, and different from nature²

"To this result have we attained, since we presuppose the concept of nature as an independent (self-dependent) essence which has nothing outside it as its cause, and nothing outside it as its effect, but which fully determines itself as both cause and effect, world and world-creator, the complete union of both. We found, as the basis of this, the monstrous thoughts of the identity (an *idem esse*) of being and non-being ; which identity, however, should be—not the identity of the manifestly nothing, but the identity of the unconditioned and the conditioned, of necessity and freedom ; in fact, the identity—of reason and unreason, of good and evil, of things and nothings."³

But the human reason rests on diversity in these conceptions, and demands the opposition and indestructible dualism of the supernatural and nature, of freedom and necessity, of foresight and blind accident or chance.⁴ Jacobi noticing this practical dualism, and the *Trieb* which he finds in man, maintains this dualism firmly, though he says that nature is that finite which stands in connection with God the infinite. He thus evidently tries to avoid an ultimate

¹ III, pp. 392-3.

² *Ibid.*, p. 397.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 393-4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 394.

dualism, though he sees no way to avoid a practical one. He says man's body is one with the mechanism of nature, but that his spirit came directly from God.¹ And just as man knows himself to be above nature, so he knows that above him is an all-highest essence, God.²

It is plain to Jacobi that such a universe as naturalism demands, without beginning and end, would be but a 'negative infinite.' It cannot be grounded in itself, nor explained out of itself.³ "But just as impossible is it to prove the contrary, viz., that nature is a work and is not God, that it is not creator and creation at the same time, not indeed the only essence. The conclusion which is drawn that nature cannot be dependent on a cause outside itself that brought it forth and must have begun it, was, is, and remains a conclusion which is false and without philosophical justification.

"By the manifold attempts which have been made philosophically to overcome this or that impossibility, the two opposite parties, the naturalists and the theists, have always referred in one way or other to the same fundamental principle, viz., that of the unconditioned, and always with the same reason or unreason." "That all becoming necessarily presupposes a being or a moving being which has not become; that all change, and therewith all time order, presupposes an unchanging eternal; that all conditions presuppose an unconditioned absolute; this truth, as an immediate presupposition of reason, or as a positive self-revelation has been recognized by all philosophers. They separate only on the question whether this Absolute is a ground or a cause. That it is a ground and not a cause is the opinion of the naturalists; that it is a cause and not a ground, that of the theists."⁴

This brings Jacobi to a discussion of the principles of ground and cause. A clear distinction between these he regarded as fundamental to a grasp of the truth. As we have just seen, he regarded it as the mistake of all the naturalists from Spinoza to Schelling that they have substituted the principle of ground for that of cause. The main distinction between the two is that the former excludes while the latter includes the idea of time. The former, therefore, if it were the principle of the universe, would render the universe static, as in Spinozism; while the latter alone would permit a development—a moving universe.

Disregard of this, that we never understand the term 'ground'

¹ III, p. 399. Cf. also p. 458.

² *Ibid.*, p. 401.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 402-3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 403-4.

as anything other than the content, the all-ness of the determinations of an object, has caused endless confusion in philosophy.¹ There can be no time element between whole and parts, or ground and consequents, for the whole cannot be present before the parts, nor the parts after or without the whole. "With the entrance of time the concept of ground changes to that of cause and effect. As, however, the effect proceeds out of the cause, and both are in a necessary way joined together, we know only that, if we abstract the idea of continuous time, the cause changes into ground (subject), the effect into mere consequent (predicate), and both (cause and effect) pass into one another. Thus we explain the single and entire results of a man out of his permanent disposition, his unchanging character. Where we cannot proceed in this manner, and in our consideration get rid of time, there we attain to no insight, but acquire through experience, like the beasts, mere expectation of similar cases."²

Ground appeared to Jacobi to be the highest concept of the understanding, while the highest concept of the reason is cause.³ Ground is but the principle of composition, while cause alone is the principle of generation.⁴ Ground, then, as the principle which is used by the naturalists, has been seen to be insufficient; for it excludes time, and hence all development, or even change. A universe so regarded would necessarily be static. Cause is the principle of the theists, and points to an Absolute who is the cause of all things that appear, a God who is Creator and Lord.

Ancients and moderns, then, admitting nature and its changes, ask, Whence came Nature? The Naturalists reply by saying that it is a foolish question, and that they may as well ask of the theists, Whence came God? We may say that "the being of the universe appears to us necessarily as a miracle, as an impossibility, because the human understanding conceives as possible only what *becomes*, what can or could arise. The universe, however, is something which is necessarily eternal as the Creator. This last, that God has necessarily created from eternity, is not denied by even the deep-thinking theists. So the question vexes them not less than the naturalists: How the finite can proceed from the infinite, the many from the one, the changeable temporal, from the unchangeable eternal;

¹ III, p. 451.

² *Ibid.*, p. 452.

³ This shows, as we have all along contended, that to Jacobi 'reason' became more and more a form of thought rather than of feeling.

⁴ III, pp. 453-4. Cf. also, IV, b, pp. 145-6; and II, pp. 184 ff. Cf. Pünjer, *op. cit.*, p. 625; also Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

how such a process can go on incessantly. One may choose either of the two: assume with the naturalists that the unconditioned or Absolute which reason presupposes is only the substrate of the conditioned, the one of the all; or with the theists that the unconditioned or the Absolute is a self-conscious, free cause, analogous to rational will, an all-highest intelligence working according to ends. It remains, however, equally impossible in the one choice as in the other to explain the being of the universe as an origin out of such a First."¹

We thus see that Jacobi regarded time as a factor in the divine consciousness, though he also says that in another way the Absolute is above time. The universe has not a temporal but a logical dependence upon him, he having created it from all eternity. A being to whom time is an object must in some sense be above time, though in another sense time enters into the very centre of his consciousness. That is, ontologically, time is his object; while, psychologically, he is subject to the concept of time. This is undoubtedly true of the individual consciousness, and probably is true in some way of the absolute consciousness, though, not having the same natural cycles as man, the absolute consciousness will not in the same sense be subject to time.

Jacobi regarded the object-subjectivity, or the absolute identity of being and consciousness, which was a phase of Schelling's naturalism, as of a piece with Spinoza's identification of the thinking and the extended substance.² To Spinoza the identification is necessarily unknown, and so is of no value to man in practical affairs. To Schelling it is equally unknown, and, as far as the individual is concerned, it becomes nothing. But Jacobi looks favorably on Plato's doctrine, and in fact regards his own as one with it. The unity behind the multiplicity becomes, in his philosophy, a real being. The forms and individual things of the world are possible only because of the earlier existence of the ideas; and the multiplicity of the world is possible only because of the earlier *One* which produces it, and which is itself not multiple but truly *one*.³ Thus the multiplicity does not produce the unity, but the unity produces the multiplicity. The existence of 'things' requires a self-existent being who is God, a One who is the source of the multiplicity, and in whom it has meaning. "This Platonic doctrine is not further from materialism than it is from idealism. It considers the actuality of the sense world, its objectivity; considers the actuality of the highest

¹ III, pp. 409-410.

² *Ibid.*, p. 429.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 455-6.

cause; the truth of the ideas of the good and beautiful; distinguishes the supernatural from the natural, the created from the uncreated; the world from its creator; that is, it is decidedly dualistic and theistic."¹

We have now reached the conclusion of our review of Jacobi's direct criticism of modern philosophers from Descartes to Schelling. It will be evident at once that Jacobi's interpretation of these systems is sometimes inadequate. Especially is this true in the case of Spinoza and Kant. It is becoming increasingly evident that the deepest meaning of Spinoza is in reality an idealism, and not a materialism, as Jacobi thinks. In the case of Kant, Jacobi adopted the conception of the *a priori* element that was common in his day and for some time afterwards. But it is more correct to regard Kant's *a priori* not as something known before experience, but as the element the mind contributes to experience. Similarly, it might be said for Schelling that his Absolute is not so completely one with the world-process as Jacobi understands. But inasmuch as Jacobi's own views come out chiefly in criticism, it seemed best to devote some time to an examination of his criticisms. From this point, then, we shall try to gather up the main features of his own views, in a more or less systematic form.

Jacobi firmly believed in a personal God, and, accordingly, strongly approved Kant's insistence upon the personality of the Divine.² And, reverting to Schelling, he added that those who deify nature deny God. The personality of man indicates the personality of God. "Without a divine Thou there is no human I, and without a human I no divine Thou."³ He conceived personality to consist in will and freedom and intelligence; and that therefore, if we conceive the cause of the world as an intelligence or as a ruler, we must conceive him as a person.⁴ He readily accepted the anthropomorphism of Christian theism, regarding it not as a defect but as the necessary opposite of pantheism or cosmotheism.⁵ It is what has always been known as theism.⁶ But God is not therefore corporeal; yet he knows, loves, wills.⁷ There is no other kind of God, —no other use of the word is valid. "God is only God, if knowledge and goodness prevail in all his acts, if he possess a fore-seeing

¹ III, p. 460.

² IV, a, p. xxiv.

³ *Ibid.*, p. xlii.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xlv.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xlviii.

⁶ Zirngiebl, *Jacobi's Leben, Dichten und Denken*, p. 268.

⁷ III, pp. 422-3.

power and might, so that a purpose lies at the basis of all his acts."¹

That there must be such a God is evident from what man finds in himself. For, granting man's intelligence, we must allow him to have freedom and power, or else his intelligence plays only the role of spectator.² And just as man finds in himself a power which is above mere nature, so he has along with this the consciousness of an essence above him, which is not merely the all-highest, but which is God. This God is not a blind, all-powerful force, but the world-soul, who has will, knowledge, freedom, and love³ Nor is it enough to think of God as an idea in which centres certain conceptions; but he must indeed be a person in order to account for the fact of worship. Otherwise, worship would not be intelligible,⁴ for if man does not accept the true objective person of God, then he makes himself to be God,⁵ and his worship of God is but the worship of himself. If, then, there is no personal God, there can be no true religion, no adoration, no worship. Jacobi says he would even prefer the view that makes God an idol to that which worships only one's self; for the former denies God only with the lips.⁶ Atheism would destroy all reverence, and so would disenchant the universe;⁷ for reverence cannot exist except for spirit,—never for a mere mechanism.⁸

Moreover, Jacobi thought that the highest aspirations of man indicate the objective being of these ideals, and this implies the objective being of God.⁹ Goodness, beauty, and truth, all need to have objective being to be real. "But the good—what is it? I have no answer if there be no God."¹⁰ The problem of the existence of God, then, resolves itself for Jacobi into the problem of the objectivity of the good, the beautiful, and the true;¹¹ and the true objectivity of these he never doubts.

It is at once apparent that Jacobi regarded the relation of theism and religion to morality as very close. Faith must precede virtue, for faith is the foundation of virtue. With the disappearance of faith in God, virtue would vanish.¹² Religion and morality are re-

¹ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, p. 252; *cf.* Jacobi, II, pp. 49-51.

² IV, a, p. 59.

³ III, pp. 273-4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁷ II, p. 52.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

⁹ III, p. 33.

¹⁰ IV, a, p. xlii.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. xlvii-xlviii.

ciprocal, and both depend on the being of spirit. Through moral improvement we are raised to a worthy conception of the highest essence.¹ Reverence for divine things lies at the foundation of all virtue, and of all sense of honor.²

Concerning religion he says: "The spirit of my religion is therefore this: man exists through a divine life in God; and there is a peace of God which is higher than all reason; in him dwells the participation and the contemplation of an incomprehensible love."³ There is thus in man a consciousness of a higher and of an enclosing being, and unless there be a God of whom man is a spark, then man's being deceives him, and the remainder of his being is a lie.⁴ This boundlessness of the human spirit which conceives the good and the beautiful to be outside itself must be in God, if nature is from him and not he from nature.⁵

Religion, then, is conceived by Jacobi to consist in an immediate consciousness of God, who is thought of as a great enclosing spirit from whom we proceed. This spirit we can know directly. God must himself be born in man, if man is to have a living God, and not merely an idol. Then man is able to feel God the same as he feels and imagines himself.⁶ In this way one has more than the idea of God, he has the actuality, the truth.⁷ The relation of God to the individual is an immediate revelation, and the content of the revelation is an immediate truth for the individual.⁸ This immediate experience is the only origin of truth, either sensible or supersensible. The former is called knowledge, the latter faith.⁹

Theism is to Jacobi first practical, a matter of immediate experience, and only incidentally speculative.¹⁰ Some writers have charged him with inconsistency for attempting to give any exposition of his theism, and say that all he could properly do would be merely to affirm the existence of God for his faith.¹¹ This criticism would be valid only if we should regard his 'faith' as entirely a feeling content. But, as we have seen, it is not merely such, for it tends more and more throughout his writings to become a thought content. An

¹ III, pp. 275 ff.

² IV, a, p. 33.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 212-213.

⁴ II, p. 44.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁶ III, pp. 277-279.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

⁸ Zirngiebl, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

⁹ Drews, *Die deutsche Spekulation seit Kant*, Bd. II, pp. 5-6.

¹⁰ IV, a, p. xxxix.

¹¹ Pfeleiderer, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 230-231.

immediacy of thought, then, admits of exposition, and indeed calls for it. What Jacobi does say is that God is not revealed to the understanding, but to the reason, and this immediately by a sort of inspiration. Without such an inspiration, there would be no reverence, no beauty, no virtue, no stars in the night of our being.¹ Nature generally, as in our breasts, partly announces and partly conceals God. It is only the highest essence in man that points to an all-highest outside of him. The spirit in him alone speaks of God. It is as such that we think of ourselves as coming from spirit. Otherwise we would have to suppose the living as coming from the non-living, and light from darkness.²

It was the view of Jacobi that nature conceals rather than reveals God; for nature is but a concatenation of causes and effects, without beginning or end, without either foresight or chance. It works without will, and without deliberation either for the good or the beautiful. Man alone reveals God, since he with his spirit lifts himself above nature. And as Christianity has set forth a personal God who reveals himself to man, it is therefore the only true religion. All else is atheism and idolatry.³ But his mysticism regards the being of God as incomprehensible; and he says it is the part of wisdom to admit this limitation of human thought.⁴

This revelation of God in the soul constitutes the basis of Jacobi's ethical doctrines. This knowledge of God is but a dim light which is meant to entice us on to fuller and more perfect knowledge. It constitutes desire; and the fulfilment of this divine desire is the fulfilment of the highest good. This, too, manifests God's purpose in the world. It is to create a world that he might show his love. Creation is only that God might will the beautiful and the good in order to love it.⁵ The purpose, then, toward man is to develop him to that point at which there can be a mutual love between God and man, where man will know God and imitate him, and where, accordingly, there will be love and consequent joy for both.

The spiritual faculty, or reason, then, constitutes in man the original desire and *Trieb*. Reason is a stirring, a developing faculty, and is above the mere natural, and masters it.⁶ We must have, in some measure, the revelation of reason in order that it may constitute a *Trieb*; for what is not in any way known to us, we never can seek.⁷

¹ III, pp. 293-4.

² *Ibid.*, p. 325.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 425-6.

⁴ IV, a, p. 71.

⁵ III, p. 274.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 276.

And what this *Grundtrieb* of human nature, as an object of knowledge or will, strives after, men have always called Divine Things.¹ This determination or power man has by himself, by virtue of his spiritual nature. This enables him to raise himself above the animal part of himself by wisdom, goodness, and power of will. From this proceeds all virtue, which is an end in itself, and does not depend on the conception of duty, nor on the desire of happiness, but springs up originally.²

Man, then, as a conscious, active essence, is conditioned by a double external,—a nature beneath him and a God above him.³ The former he must overcome and subordinate to the latter; and this can be done only because he participates in a very real way in the essence of the divine. This furnishes his desire, and gives rise to his search, his effort. The need, however, does not reveal what satisfies it; this is seen only in experience. The experience itself, nevertheless, is possible only through a divine prophesying soul, endowed with an original foresight.⁴ But the activity of man, the original *Trieb*, is an expression of God, and this we call the will. The relations in which it finds itself (together with the like relations of things) are the laws of nature. The direction toward the finite is the sensible endeavor, or the principle of desire; while the direction toward the eternal is the intellectual endeavor, or the principle of love.⁵

As the moral *Trieb* is the truly proper human energy,⁶ it involves the freedom of man, or an ability to rise to the attainment of the objects of his love (or spiritual desire), or to express that which is one's inmost being.⁷ A conflict of desires raises the conception of right and wrong; for all cannot be gratified in the same measure.⁸ This sort of freedom, or "the independency of the inner power of the will, or the possible sovereignty of the intellectual essence over the sensible essence, is *de facto* conceded by all men."⁹ This shows that Jacobi holds the supremacy of man over nature to be in respect to his moral power, his moral freedom, his will, "which is a spark out of the Eternal Light, and a power out of the Almighty."¹⁰

¹ III, p. 317.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 318-319.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 274.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 440.

⁵ IV, a, p. 34.

⁶ V, p. 217.

⁷ Pünjer, *op. cit.*, pp. 645-6.

⁸ IV, a, p. 21.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

Concerning Immortality, the third of the purely metaphysical topics, Jacobi did not say much directly. He maintained that the immediate intuition of immortality was given in the same manner as that of God and Freedom. He appeared to regard immortality as being involved in theism and in freedom. Having, as he thought, established the latter, he seemed to think the subject of immortality needed no special exposition. He took it, as Kant had done, as the necessary corollary of the religious and moral life.

CONCLUSION.

It is at once evident that Jacobi's thought was not very systematic, nor his doctrines well formulated. There is an indefiniteness in his writings such as one is not surprised to find in a writer who has close affiliations with mysticism. Hence it is to his general attitude and point of view, rather than to any definitely elaborated contributions to philosophy, that we can point in our concluding remarks. Some historians, indeed, have said that his importance is to be found entirely in his penetrating criticisms of earlier philosophers. But Jacobi is not without constructive importance, and his point of view has had considerable influence upon subsequent thinkers.

The empirical point of view which characterized all Jacobi's thinking, has become the point of view of all philosophy since his day. He insisted that philosophy is an interpretation of life as it is, and that what we have to explain is experience, all of which is the experience of the individual. In this experience, he says, we come into actual contact with both sensible and supersensible facts. In opposition to the sensationalists, he maintained that we know directly the facts of the world of sense. This is in accordance with the modern theory that judgment relates immediately to reality. And in opposition to the rationalists, he says that we know the supersensible, not by an inference, but by direct experience. This is his doctrine of immediacy.

But, in accordance with that mysticism which he acquired early in life, he at first regarded this experience as a feeling rather than as a thought content. Certain writers have considered this his final position. But there is evidence to show that he gradually came to see that this was a thought content. His substitution of the term 'reason' for 'feeling' seems to show this conclusively. And it is borne out by the fact that toward the close of his life he was able to give his thought a more systematic formulation, as is seen in his *General Introduction*, which was one of the last of his writings.

His view of mind as active, and of life and consciousness as one, lead to the conception that man is essentially spiritual, and the universe the expression of an infinite spirit. He believes man to be the forth-putting of an Infinite Person whose purposes are being fulfilled in the world as a whole, but especially in man who alone can comprehend both himself and the eternal. He believed that natural-

ism, such as Schelling's, involves the contradictory conception of a moving, developing universe that does not proceed from thought, and that is not working out the purposes of thought. Such a developing universe can only be the expression of a spiritual being who must be regarded as a person. But Jacobi's view suffers somewhat in approximating a transcendent rather than an immanent theism.

It has been said that Jacobi is a realist, and his philosophy has been characterized as the origin of German realism. But he is at any rate not a materialistic realist; for, as we have just seen, he is a strict theist, believing also that man's nature is essentially spiritual. His language, moreover, is usually the language of realism, but we find it easier to interpret his thought as a groping and imperfect idealism. We have seen reason to regard him as having closer affiliations with the idealists than with the realists, for his thought is, that spirit is the final term of the universe, and that all things have their being only in an Absolute who is spirit, and not substance. It is this conception, then, that leads us to call him an imperfect idealist, and his philosophy one of the springs of German Idealism.

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CORNELL STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

No. 7

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF
FICHTE'S PHILOSOPHY

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New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1906

E. H.

PRESS OF
 THE NEW ERA PRINTING COMPANY
 LANCASTER, PA.

~~104489~~

PREFACE.

THE purpose of this monograph is to make a careful study of Fichte's conception of the ultimate principle. In his various writings the principle appears under many different names. 'The Ego,' 'the Idea of the Ego,' 'the moral world-order,' 'God,' 'the Absolute,' 'Being,' 'the Light,' are some of the phrases by which it is most commonly designated.

It is not the main purpose of this study to examine the much discussed question of the relation between the two periods of Fichte's philosophy. But the question is so intimately connected with the problem which I have undertaken that some discussion of it is inevitable. I have tried, however, to keep well within the limits of my theme, and instead of considering the relation between the two periods in all its aspects, have sought merely to determine how far the conception of the fundamental principle which we find in Fichte's later writings differs from that which appears in the earlier ones.

The references to Fichte's writings are to the *Sämmtliche Werke* (Berlin, 1845-1846, 8 vols.) and to the *Nachgelassene Werke* (Bonn, 1834-1835, 3 vols.). References to the *Sämmtliche Werke* are indicated by the letters S. W.; to the *Nachgelassene Werke*, by the letters N. W. References to the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* are indicated by the letters A (for the First Edition) and B (for the Second). All other references to Kant's writings are made to Hartenstein's second edition of the *Sämmtliche Werke* (Leipzig, 1867-1868, 8 vols.) and are indicated by the letter H.

My thanks are due, first of all, to my former teacher, Professor J. E. Creighton, of Cornell University, for many valuable suggestions during the progress of the work and for assistance while it was passing through the press; then, to Professor Ernest Albee, of Cornell University, for his kindness in reading part of the proof; to my colleague, Miss Paula Höfer, of Mount Holyoke College, and my former colleague, Dr. Natalie Wipplinger, now

of Wellesley College, for help with regard to a nice question of German syntax; and to Miss Grace Hadley, of Mount Holyoke College, for her assistance in reading part of the proof. I wish also to express my thanks to the editors of *Kant-Studien* and *Mind* for permission to use parts of my articles upon Fichte which have appeared in these journals (in *Kant-Studien*, Vol. IV, pp. 286 ff., and in *Mind*, N. S., Vol. X, pp. 336 ff.).

E. B. T.

MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE,
SOUTH HADLEY, MASS.,
July, 1906.

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CHAPTER I.

KANT AND FICHTE: THE RELATION OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS TO ITS IDEAL.

The relation of Fichte to the master to whom he always gave the chief credit of his own doctrines has been carefully studied many times and has been discussed from various points of view. The present chapter does not profess to give an exhaustive treatment of this question. Its purpose is rather to consider it in the particular aspect which will be of most service in our further examination of Fichte's doctrine. The problem of the relation between human consciousness and the ideal unity which it is ever seeking to attain, suggests an interesting comparison between the two philosophers and gives at the same time a convenient method of approach to the more detailed study of Fichte which we shall attempt in the later chapters.

In the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, a sharp line of distinction is drawn between the formal and the material aspect of human cognition. On the one hand, we have the matter, which is given from without; on the other, the formative activity, which comes from within. These two seem to be utterly disparate: the matter is mere matter; the form, mere form. The content of knowing, if we look at it in itself, is a mere manifold — chaotic, unrelated, meaningless. It is only through the unifying activity of the understanding that this formless mass receives shape and meaning; it is only because the scattered sensations have been worked upon by a relating activity that they have been united into significant wholes.¹ In itself the matter is essentially formless. "In

¹ It is implied in this interpretation that space and time, as well as the categories, are phases of the activity of the self. It would take us too far from our main problem if we should stop to discuss the correctness of this assumption. Explicitly, Kant makes space and time pure forms and yet denies spontaneity of them. But it seems that the logic of his system requires him to say that the entire formal aspect of our experience is due to the spontaneity of consciousness, while only the material aspect is to be referred to receptivity. And perhaps it may be urged that by introducing the imagination, which is to mediate between sense and understanding, and by making the pure *schema* a transcendental determination of time, Kant implicitly corrects his explicit statements.

the phenomenon I call that which corresponds to the sensation its *matter*, but that which makes it possible for the manifold of the phenomenon to be arranged¹ in certain relations I call its *form*. . . . That through which alone the sensations can be arranged and put into a certain form cannot itself in turn be sensation."²

And on the other hand, if we look at the unifying activity of thought by itself, it seems to be mere form. For its content it is wholly dependent upon something external. As soon as the manifold is given, the unifying activity can shape and mould it ; but the manifold must be given. The formative principle has no power to create its own content ; the form of knowledge is essentially empty. "The manifold must be given for perception before the synthesis of the understanding and independently of it. . . . The categories are rules only for an understanding whose whole faculty consists in thinking (that is, in the act of bringing to the unity of apperception the synthesis of the manifold which it has received in perception), an understanding, therefore, which by itself knows nothing, but which merely binds together and arranges the material for knowledge, the perception which must be given to it by the object."³

Even when we consider this formative principle in its highest manifestation, the transcendental unity of apperception, the case is no better ; here, too, the form is mere form. One might think, indeed, that in this pure self-consciousness we have, at least implicitly, that union of subject and object which must always constitute the ideal of knowledge ; here, if nowhere else, it would seem, we may hope to find a form which can supply its own content, which needs no aid from any foreign principle. But Kant does not long permit us to cherish this hope. On this point his statements are very explicit : we may not say that in the pure Ego, form and content, subject- and object-self, are one ; for in the pure Ego there is no content, no object-self, at all. The transcendental unity of apperception is mere form ; in itself it has

¹ I have followed the reading of the Second Edition, "geordnet werden kann" ; the First Edition has "geordnet, angeschaut wird."

² A, 20 ; B, 34.

³ B, 145.

no content whatever. We may call the Ego simple "because this idea (*Vorstellung*) has no content and thus no manifold."¹ "Through the *Ego* as simple idea nothing manifold is given; the manifold can be given only in perception, which is different from the Ego."²

Thus we seem to have a complete opposition between the two factors of human knowing: its matter is essentially formless; its form, essentially empty. We must not forget, however, that we have discovered this opposition by considering the two elements abstractly. In the concrete process of thought, the content is not formless, nor is the form empty. As a matter of fact, we never have mere form or mere content; we always have a union of form and content. How clearly Kant himself sees this, is perhaps an open question.³ It is one, however, that we need not stop to consider; for even if we maintain that Kant regarded his separation of form and matter as a methodological device, we must still admit that his doctrine of the nature of thought is far from satisfactory. He may not mean to say that the two elements of our knowledge ever actually exist apart; but there can be little doubt that he represents their union in thinking as more or less artificial. The two factors are always found together, but

¹ A, 381.

² B, 135.

³ There are, no doubt, many passages in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* which speak of the formal element of thought as if it existed in the mind ready-made, like a mould waiting to be filled. But words like the following seem to indicate that Kant sometimes rose above this crude conception:

"In this I or He or It . . . which thinks, nothing more is represented than a transcendental subject of the thoughts—an *X* which can be known only by means of the thoughts, its predicates, and of which, apart from them, we can never have the least concept" (A, 346; B, 404).

"The manifold given in a sensuous perception belongs of necessity under the original synthetic unity of apperception" (B, 143.)

"The understanding cannot perceive anything; the senses cannot think anything. Only from the union of the two can knowledge arise. But we should not on this account confuse their respective contributions; on the contrary there is good reason for our carefully separating and distinguishing the one from the other" (A, 51; B, 75 f.).

Perhaps we shall come nearest to the truth if we say that Kant held both views without clearly differentiating them; that he never quite outgrew his earlier and cruder notion of form and matter as actually existing apart, but that on the other hand he sometimes had glimpses of the truer conception.

they are not shown to belong together; they imply, but at the same time repel, each other; they do not constitute an organic unity. As Professor Creighton says: "Each object of knowledge is taken as really composed of a contribution from sense and a contribution from understanding. These elements really enter into it, and can be analyzed out of it. . . . The synthetic character of thought . . . is conceived . . . as analogous to a process of mechanical fabrication, or chemical combination."¹

This defect in human knowing, as Kant conceives it, comes out most clearly when we consider the contrast between our cognition and that ideal of knowledge which he holds before us in his conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung*. The whole question of the nature of *intellektuelle Anschauung* and of its relation to the other features of Kant's system is one of much interest. Thiele's careful study,² to which I am much indebted, has made it evident that the conception, as it appears in the *Kritik*, has more than one form. According to his interpretation, there are three main stages in the development of the doctrine. On this point I am inclined to disagree with him: the conception, it seems to me, has only two distinct phases; and it has these two because at different times Kant approaches the problem from two different points of view.³ In human cognition, form and matter seem to stand apart; but in the ideal of knowledge they must constitute a perfect unity. Now in one phase of the doctrine of *intellektuelle Anschauung*, Kant starts with the concept of matter and seeks to pass from it to the thought of this organic unity, while in the other phase he attempts to reach the ideal by starting with the concept of form. In the one case, he tries to give us a matter which contains its own principle of form; in the other, a form which supplies itself with content.

The first attempt gives us the doctrine in its cruder aspect. *Intellektuelle Anschauung* is the faculty of immediately apprehending things in themselves. Our cognition is defective because it deals with mere phenomena; the objects of perceptive under-

¹ "The Nature of Intellectual Synthesis," *Philosophical Review*, V, 145.

² *Kant's intellektuelle Anschauung als Grundbegriff seines Kriticismus*, Halle, 1876.

³ For a discussion of this question, see Appendix, Note A.

standing are noumena. "We are of such a nature that our perception can never be other than sensuous; that is, it is nothing but the way in which we are affected by objects."¹ And since this is so, we can never know objects as they are; their real nature is warped by the fact that they are apprehended in space and time. If, however, there were a mode of perception which was non-sensuous, it might apprehend objects as they are. Such a faculty Kant calls *intellectual perception* or sometimes *perceptive understanding*. "If I assume things which are mere objects of the understanding and which yet as such can be given to a perception—which, however, would be, not sensuous perception, but *intuitus intellectualis*—things of this sort would be called noumena or *intelligibilia*. . . . For if the senses merely represent something to us as it appears, this something must still in itself be a thing and an object of a non-sensuous perception, that is, of the understanding. In other words, a kind of knowledge must be possible in which no sensibility is found and which alone has absolute objective reality, in which, that is, objects are represented to us *as they are*, whereas in the empirical use of our understanding things are known only *as they appear*."²

In this passage, *intellektuelle Anschauung* seems to be conceived as pure receptivity. Objects are still 'given' to perception, are 'represented' to the understanding which apprehends them. This intellectual perception is superior to our knowledge simply in the fact that the content is given as it is in itself, and is not altered in the process of being received and unified. The matter given in human experience is warped by being subjected to the unifying activity which works through the pure forms of perception and conception. As given, it is a shapeless mass, which receives form only through the activity of a new principle; and this principle is regarded by Kant, not as dwelling in the matter itself, but as working upon it from without. In *intellektuelle Anschauung*, on the contrary, the form is immanent. No discursive faculty of understanding imposes upon the discrete con-

¹ A, 51; B, 75.² A, 249.

tent a unity that is foreign to its nature.¹ The matter of *intellektuelle Anschauung* contains its own principle of unity ; the content is at the same time the form.

This conception, however, is far from being satisfactory. For, although from one point of view *intellektuelle Anschauung* seems to have its form within itself, and in so far to be an organic unity, yet from another, we see that the unity is by no means perfect. So long as we have the faculty of apprehension set over against that which it apprehends, there must be at least a partial opposition of form and matter. The given content may bring its form with it ; but in the process of being received, it will of necessity undergo some modification ; the form of the apprehended content must differ from that of the content which is not apprehended.

In the second and higher phase of the doctrine, this difficulty does not exist. Here Kant starts with the formal principle of knowledge, and asks himself how it must be modified in order to correspond to our notion of ideal cognition. The great defect of the pure Ego is its emptiness ; the *I think* is indeed the highest form, but it is form devoid of content. And because of its emptiness, it cannot in itself give us any cognition whatever. "In the original synthetic unity of apperception . . . I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself ; I am conscious merely that I am. *This conscious state (Vorstellung) is a thinking, not a perceiving.* Now for knowledge of the self, we need, not only the act of thinking, which brings the manifold of every possible perception to the unity of apperception, but also a definite mode of perception, by which this manifold is given."²

Thus it is the emptiness of the *I think* which prevents it from meeting the requirements of our ideal. It is because it has no content of its own, because it is dependent upon something else for the matter with which it works, that it is defective as a principle of knowledge. If then we are to conceive of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as free from the limitations of the pure Ego of

¹ "An understanding to which [the noumenon] belongs, that is, one which cognizes its object, not discursively through categories, but intuitively (*intuitiv*) in a non-sensuous perception" (A, 256 ; B, 311 f.).

² B, 157.

apperception, we must think of it as self-consciousness which is not empty, but which finds within itself the material upon which it is to work. And this is the conception to which Kant comes. In the higher form of the doctrine, *intellektuelle Anschauung* is described as a pure self-consciousness which is its own object, a self-consciousness in which the act of unifying the manifold is at the same time the process whereby this manifold first comes into being. "The consciousness of self (or apperception) is the simple idea (*Vorstellung*) of the Ego ; and if through it alone all the manifold in the subject were given *by self-activity* (*selbst-thätig*), then the inner perception would be intellectual."¹ "An understanding in which, through its self-consciousness, all the manifold was also given, would perceive."² In this thought of the pure self-consciousness which is one with its object because it has itself for object, we have Kant's highest conception of the ideal of knowledge. Here at last we find the perfect union of form and content ; here the dualism which is so manifest in human cognition gives place to a higher unity.

This is certainly a more satisfactory conception of the ideal of knowledge than that which we have in the first form of the doctrine. Still it is by no means free from difficulty. For Kant's *intellektuelle Anschauung* is at best but a problematic concept ; we can never assert that there is any reality corresponding to it. Moreover, our notion of this perfect cognition is so vague and indefinite that strictly speaking we have no right to call it a concept at all. "We could . . . not prove that another kind of perception [than the sensuous] is possible, and although our thought can abstract from every kind of sensibility, still it remains a question whether after the abstraction any object at all is left, whether what we have, is not merely the form of a concept."³ "One cannot assume that [noumena] can be given without presupposing that another kind of perception than the sensuous is possible ; and this presupposition we have no right to make. . . . We have an understanding which *problematically* extends beyond the sphere of phenomena ; but we have no perception, nor even

¹ B, 68.² B, 135.³ A, 252 f.

the concept of a possible perception, by which objects lying outside the field of sensibility could be given to us."¹ But the case is even more serious than this. Not only is it true that our ideal of knowledge is, and must be, vague, and that we have no warrant for saying that there is any reality corresponding to it; there is the further difficulty that it is for us utterly unattainable — nay, more, that it is a goal to which human knowing cannot even approximate. The limits of our cognition are fixed once for all. Whatever progress the future may bring, must always be a progress within these limits, never a transcending of them. We know only the appearance; we can never come face to face with the thing-in-itself. Progress in knowledge can consist merely in learning more and more about phenomena; it can never bring us one whit nearer to the reality behind them.

That Kant draws this sharp line of demarcation between human knowing and its ideal, is evident, I think, as soon as one considers the general spirit of the *Kritik*. The declaration that metaphysics is impossible, the assertion that our knowledge must be limited to phenomena, the insistence that our perception is always sensuous and that the transcendental Ego cannot have the slightest content, indicate a belief that the difference between our cognition and *intellektuelle Anschauung* is one, not of degree, but of kind. The few passages in the *Kritik* which seem to throw any doubt upon this interpretation are those in which Kant speaks of the possible common root of sensibility and understanding. "Human cognition has two stems, sensibility and understanding; these perhaps spring from a common root, which, however, is unknown to us."² "That something which forms the ground of external phenomena . . . might also, regarded as noumenon (or better, as transcendental object), be at the same time the subject of the thoughts."³ From these passages it seems that Kant recognized the possibility that the formal and material aspects of thought might have the same origin. Still his emphatic repudiation of the principles of the *Wissenschafts-*

¹ A, 254 f.; B, 309 f.

² A, 15; B, 29. Cf. A, 835; B, 863.

³ A, 358.

*lehre*¹ shows that this recognition did not affect his general position. So much at least he would say, that *for us* the dualism of form and content is ultimate;² that our ideal of a unity in which it is surmounted, is only a problematic concept; and that *so far as we can ever know*, our cognition is wholly different in kind from this ideal unity.

It seems necessary to lay some emphasis upon this point because it is often overlooked.³ Reading Kant, as we do, in the light of those who came after him, we are sometimes prone to attribute to him doctrines which should really be credited to his successors. In a sense, of course, it is true that the conception of knowledge as an ever-deepening unity of subject and object owes its being to Kant; but it is true chiefly in the sense that, by drawing a sharp line of distinction between the two aspects of consciousness, Kant set others to thinking how the opposition might be overcome. The thought that subject and object *must* be a unity, that the apparent dualism in our knowing *cannot* be ultimate, is to be credited, not to Kant, but to Fichte; and I do not see what is to be gained by attributing to Kant a doctrine which he explicitly rejected, and which is at variance with the general spirit of his philosophy.

¹ In the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung* for 1799, Kant explains his attitude toward Fichte's development of the critical philosophy. "I regard Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*," he says, "as a system which it is utterly impossible to accept. . . . Why it should be assumed that I have meant to give merely a *propædæutic* to the transcendental philosophy, not the system of this philosophy itself, is incomprehensible to me. Such a purpose has never entered my mind, since I have regarded it as the best evidence of the truth of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* that we have in it the completed whole of pure philosophy" (H., VIII, 600).

² That is, in this life. In one passage he speaks of the possibility that death may be "the end of this sensuous use of our knowing faculty and the beginning of the intellectual use of it" (A, 778; B, 806 f.).

³ E. g., by Thiele. His position is not stated with so much clearness as is to be wished; but apparently he tries to show that our own self-consciousness, as Kant conceived it, not merely suggests the ideal, but is itself a partial realization of the ideal. *Intellektuelle Anschauung* in its highest form is, according to Thiele, "absolute knowing, absolute identity of knowing and being." "Our human self-consciousness is a very feeble reflection of this absolute knowing." Apparently, however, the difference between the two is not in kind, but merely in degree. "In the act of thought, 'I,' subject and object coincide; here the knowing is the known; here is identity of knowing and being" (*Kant's intellektuelle Anschauung*, 95). In the Appendix, Note B, Thiele's interpretation is briefly considered.

It is often said, however, that the dualism which is so manifest in the earlier *Kritik* is overcome to a considerable extent in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* and the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*. With regard to the former of these two works, there is one respect, as we shall presently see, in which the statement is true ; but there are other defects of Kant's ethical theory which quite counterbalance this gain. And in general I incline to think that the amount and value of the correction which Kant is said to have made in these later writings have been greatly overestimated.

In the sphere of knowledge, we have seen, there is no possibility of the slightest approximation to the ideal ; the difference between human cognition and *intellektuelle Anschauung* is absolute. In the moral realm, however, the case seems at first sight to be somewhat better. Apparently Kant believes that we may gradually approach the ideal of morality ; the task is indeed infinite, yet there is a possibility of progress. "The perfect conformity of the will to the moral law is *holiness*, a perfection of which no rational being in the world of sense is capable at any moment of his existence. Since, however, it is demanded as practically necessary, it can be found only in an *infinite progress* toward this perfect conformity. . . . For a rational, but finite being, there is possible only an infinite progress from the lower to the higher stages of moral perfection. The *Infinite Being* . . . sees in what is to us an endless series, a complete conformity to the moral law."¹

At first thought this may seem to be a decided advance upon the doctrine of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. As soon, however, as we examine the matter closely, we see that the gain is more apparent than real ; for the advantage has been secured by lowering the concept of the ideal. In the earlier *Kritik*, the ideal is described as an organic unity of content and form ; but in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* it seems to be conceived as mere form.

The dualism which appears in the sphere of knowledge as the opposition of sense and understanding meets us in the moral realm as the opposition of desire and the moral law. According

¹ *Kr. d. pr. V.*, H., V, 128 f.

to Kant, the law is purely formal; its whole content must be sought in natural desire. And the relation between it and this desire is represented as complete opposition. Natural impulse has its source in the world of sense. It is utterly disparate from that pure self-consciousness which forms the basis of all morality. "The will is placed between its *a priori* principle, which is formal, and its *a posteriori* impulse, which is material."¹ "Only a formal law, that is, a law which prescribes to reason, as the highest condition of its maxims, nothing else than the form of its universal legislation, can be *a priori* a ground of determination for the practical reason."² Now if the two elements of our ethical experience are essentially opposed, the only morality possible for us will consist in the subjugation of one of them by the other. And this is precisely the conception which Kant seems to have of the nature of moral progress. The development is regarded as the gradual annihilation of our natural impulses. Desire is not to be taken up into the law and purified until it is worthy to be the content of the moral life; it is to be crushed out. The ideal is to be found, not in the organic unity of content and form, but in the complete subjection of content to form. "The essence of all moral worth in actions depends upon *the immediate determination of the will by the moral law*. If the determination of the will takes place *in accord* with the moral law, but yet only by means of a feeling, *of whatever sort it may be*,³ which must be presupposed in order that there may be a sufficient ground of determination for the will, . . . then the action will have *legality*, to be sure, but no *moral quality*."⁴ "The moral law . . . does violence to all our inclinations."⁵ "Only that which is united with my will solely as ground, never as effect, only that which instead of obeying my inclination, overpowers it, or at least utterly excludes it from calculation in the choice, thus, only the law, existing solely for itself, can be an object of respect."⁶

¹ *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, H., IV, 248.

² *Kr. d. pr. V.*, H., V, 68.

³ The italics in this phrase are mine.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, H., V, 76.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, H., V, 77.

⁶ *Grundl. zur Met. d. Sitten*, H., IV, 248.

These quotations seem to show that the advance which is made in the ethical writings is only apparent ; that the ideal to which we are able to approximate, is not a unity of form and matter, but mere empty form. It might be urged, however, that in identifying the formal law with the ideal of the moral life, we are misrepresenting Kant. Holiness, he tells us, is indeed the highest good, but it is not the complete good. The *summum bonum* in this latter sense is "happiness distributed . . . in exact proportion to morality."¹ I mention this as a possible interpretation, not as one which I myself accept ; the conception of the moral ideal as a union of happiness and virtue seems to me quite foreign to the spirit of the Kantian ethics. For our present purpose, however, it is not necessary to decide between these two interpretations. For even if one maintained that Kant's moral ideal is the *summum bonum* in the sense of the 'complete good' and is therefore a unity of form and content, it would still be true that this is a lower conception of the ideal than that which we find in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. The complete good is indeed a union of form and matter, but it is by no means an organic union. Virtue and happiness are not one in essence ; they are held together by an external force: In themselves they are utterly opposed ; in order to make their union intelligible, we must postulate the existence of a Divine Being. "One must regret that the keenness of these men [the Stoics and Epicureans] . . . was unfortunately directed to the task of searching out an identity between the most dissimilar concepts, those of happiness and virtue."² "Happiness and morality are two specifically *different elements* of the highest good, and their union, therefore, cannot be known *analytically*, . . . but is a *synthesis* of the concepts."³ "Thus the highest good is possible in the world only in so far as a Supreme Being is assumed who has a causality corresponding to the moral nature."⁴

¹ *Kr. d. pr.* V., H., V, 116.

² *Op. cit.*, H., V, 117.

³ *Op. cit.*, H., V, 119. We have here another illustration of that mechanical conception of synthesis to which Professor Creighton calls attention in the article from which we have quoted. See above, p. 4.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, H., V, 131.

We see, then, that whichever view we take of Kant's moral end, it is far from being the organic unity of form and content which we have in the higher stage of the doctrine of *intellektuelle Anschauung*. We are therefore justified in saying that with regard to the relation between human experience and its ideal, the second *Kritik* makes no real advance upon the first. The ideal of morality is less inaccessible than that of knowledge only because it is lower. And we are as far as ever from the conception of human experience as being implicitly that unity of form and content which we must always regard as the ideal.

Nor can I see that the case is much better when we come to the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*. It is often said, to be sure, that in this work Kant finally overcomes the dualism of his system; that in the æsthetic judgment we have the unity of subject and object for which we have long been searching; and that the concept of design bridges the gulf between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds.¹ It does not seem to me, however, that Kant really solves the problem in either of these cases, though he perhaps indicates the direction in which the solution is to be sought. At

¹ Professor Caird, for example, seems to incline to this view. He admits that Kant himself, after seeming to assert the unity of subject and object in the æsthetic Ideas and in the concept of design, finally "recoils" from this conclusion and "determines as subjective the very Ideas by which the opposition of objective and subjective seemed to be broken down." But he thinks that "this reversion to Dualism . . . should not conceal from us the real tendency" of Kant's thought, "which in the *Critique of Judgment* has all but come full circle and returned to the unity which it began by breaking up" (*The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, Glasgow, 1889, II, 453).

It may be of interest to notice Fichte's judgment upon this question. In the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1804, he says that the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*, which professes to mediate between the sensible and intelligible worlds, does not fulfill its promise. Instead of one Absolute, Kant has three. "In the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, his Absolute is *sensible experience* = *x*." The *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* gives us "the second Absolute, a *moral world* = *z*." These two worlds are utterly opposed to one another. Now in the *Introduction* to the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*, we have "the admission that the supersensible and the sensible world must be united in a common, but quite inaccessible root, which root would be the third Absolute = *y*." [Presumably Fichte's reference is to § IX of the *Introduction*, H., V, 201 ff.] I say a *third*, separated from the other two Absolutes and subsisting by itself, although it is to serve as the connection of the other two members. And in saying this, I do Kant no injustice. For if this *y* is inaccessible, then it may contain the connection of the other two; but I, for my part, cannot penetrate it nor conceive the other two mediately, as proceeding from it" (N. W., II, 103 f.).

first, indeed, it may seem that in the immediate apprehension of the beautiful, we have that harmony of subject and object for which the theoretical consciousness seeks in vain. But when we recall Kant's comparison of æsthetic and rational Ideas, we see that this can hardly have been his meaning. "Ideas . . . are conscious states (*Vorstellungen*) which are referred to an object according to a certain (subjective or objective) principle, but in such a way that they can never become knowledge of the object. Either they are referred to a perception according to a merely subjective principle of the agreement of our faculties of cognition (imagination and understanding), and in this case we call them *æsthetic* Ideas; or they are referred to a concept according to an objective principle and yet can never give a knowledge of the object, in which case we call them *Ideas of reason*. . . . An *æsthetic Idea* cannot become knowledge, because it is a *perception* (of the imagination) for which an adequate concept can never be found. An *Idea of reason* can never become knowledge, because it contains a *concept* (of the supersensible) for which the corresponding perception can never be given."¹

The natural inference from this passage seems to be that the ideal of knowledge is no more fully realized in the æsthetic, than in the rational, Idea. Just as the latter needs perception, in order that it may become valid knowledge, so the former needs conception. There is a defect even in our apprehension of the beautiful; the adequate concept (formal element) is lacking. Even if we were willing to grant that in his doctrine of the beautiful Kant comes somewhat nearer to the perfect harmony of subject and object, still we cannot help feeling that there is an essential difference between æsthetic contemplation, as he conceives it, and his ideal of *intellektuelle Anschauung*.

And when we turn to the teleological faculty of judgment, there seems to be still less reason for maintaining that the dualism of the earlier works is overcome. For Kant frequently reminds us of the difference between our cognition, with its inevitable dualism, and the ideal of a perceptive understanding, in whose

¹ *Kr. d. U.*, H., V, 353.

act of thought the existence of the object is given.¹ And he tells us more than once that the concept of design, which is supposed to mediate between the sensible and the intelligible world, has merely subjective validity. All that it does, is to make it possible for us to *think* the unity of nature and freedom. "The concept of the purposiveness of nature in her products is one which it is necessary for the human judgment to use in considering nature, but not one which touches the determination of objects themselves. Thus it is a subjective principle of reason for the judgment, which as regulative (not constitutive) has just as much necessary validity for our *human judgment* as if it were an objective principle."²

It seems clear, then, that Kant's conception of experience had not changed when he wrote the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*. The opposition which the first *Kritik* finds between the two aspects of human experience, and which reappears in the ethical treatises, meets us for the third time in the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*. In themselves, form and matter may not be opposed; but Kant is very sure that *as aspects of our experience* they stand apart; that, alike in our simplest perception and in our most complicated processes of reasoning, in our æsthetic consciousness and in our moral life, the dualism of content and form persists. We have indeed a vague notion of a kind of consciousness in which this dualism is surmounted: intellectual perception as a self-consciousness by whose act of unity the manifold content comes into being, is a perfect harmony of subject and object. But the concept of this harmony is merely problematic; we do not know that any such cognition really exists. And we may be sure that if it does exist, it is wholly unlike our own consciousness.

The difference between Kant and Fichte is nowhere more

¹ "For the human understanding it is absolutely necessary to distinguish the possibility from the actuality of things. The ground of this necessity lies in the subject and in the nature of his faculty of knowledge. For there would be no such distinction (between the possible and the actual) if it were not that our faculty of knowledge needs for its exercise two quite different things, the understanding for concepts, and sensuous perception for the objects which correspond to the concepts. That is, if our understanding were perceptive, it would have no objects except the actual" (*Op. cit.*, H., V, 414).

² *Op. cit.*, H., V, 417.

clearly marked than at this point. The motive of Fichte's philosophy is its constant effort to rise above the opposition of form and matter. Kant regards this dualism as insurmountable; Fichte insists that it can and must be resolved. His repeated attacks upon the notion of the thing-in-itself show how utterly he repudiates the doctrine of a fundamental opposition between the content and the form of thought. Knowledge, *our* knowledge, is a unity. It appears indeed as duality: but its task is just to rise above this dualism; to conquer this phenomenality; to know itself, not in its appearance, but in its truth.

But although Fichte insists that thought is essentially unitary, he does not deny that it seems to itself dualistic, nay, more, that it must seem so. "Egohood consists in the absolute identity of the subjective and the objective (absolute union of being with consciousness and of consciousness with being). . . . The essence of the Ego is not the subjective nor the objective, but — an identity. . . . Is it possible for any one to think this identity as himself? Surely not; for to think of oneself, one must *make that distinction between subjective and objective* which is *not* made in this concept [of identity]. Without this distinction no thinking is in any wise possible."¹

We see then that Fichte admits as readily as Kant the dualism of form and matter in our cognition; he makes no attempt to deny that on the plane of ordinary consciousness these two aspects of knowing are sharply opposed. But he differs from Kant in his insistence that we can rise above this plane, to a point from which we can see that the opposition is not the highest truth. "For a thorough-going idealism, *a priori* and *a posteriori* are not two, but one; only, this one is looked at from two sides."² The insight into this truth is a philosophic insight. It is only by philosophical reflection that we can hope to discover the unity which underlies the seeming duality of our experience. The finding of this unity and the exposition of the relation between it and the superficial duality is the great task which the philosopher must undertake.

¹ *Das System der Sittenlehre* (1798), S. W., IV, 42.

² *Erste Einleitung in die Wissenschaftslehre*, S. W., I, 447.

That human thought is essentially a unity, is in the first instance, as Fichte readily admits, an assumption. But he maintains that it is one of those assumptions which every philosopher must make. Philosophy as he conceives it, is simply the systematic effort to bring all the facts of experience, discordant though they seem, into relation with one supreme principle. In assuming the possibility of metaphysics — and Fichte of course does this without hesitation — we are practically assuming that the apparent duality of our experience is not ultimate, that beneath all the oppositions which force themselves so insistently upon our thought, there is an underlying unity. "It is easy to see that in presupposing the possibility of such a *Wissenschaftslehre* in general . . . we are always presupposing that human knowing actually constitutes a system. But if it is to be a system, then we can also . . . show that there must be an absolutely first *Grundsatz*."¹ That human thought is essentially unitary, follows, then, from the assertion that philosophy, as Fichte conceives it, is possible. But this assumption of the possibility of philosophy involves also another presupposition. For it is conceivable that human experience might be the dualistic manifestation of an underlying unity and yet that metaphysics should be quite impossible for us. Kant himself admits that our experience *may* have its roots in a unitary principle ; but he maintains that, supposing this principle to exist, yet from the very nature of the case we can never know anything about it and that therefore the problems of metaphysics are for us utterly insoluble. If philosophy is to be possible, then, it must be true, not only that there is such an underlying unity, but also that we may have some sort of acquaintance with it. It cannot be utterly inaccessible to human thinking ; our own consciousness must give us the key to its nature.

These, then, are the two presuppositions with which Fichte starts — that human thought, in spite of all its superficial oppositions, is the expression of a unitary principle, and that in some degree we are able by philosophical reflection to get at this principle. As we have already seen, he clearly recognizes that these

¹ *Über den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre*, S. W., I, 52.

are assumptions. From the very nature of the case they cannot at the outset be proved; they are the fundamental postulates of every philosophy. The only way in which we can hope to justify them is by working out a satisfactory system of thought based upon them. When philosophy shall have fulfilled her task, that is, when the unitary principle shall have been discovered and the seeming duality of its manifestation explained, then, and then only, will our primary assumptions have received their justification. "Before the actual investigation one cannot determine whether the solution of the problem [of philosophy] is possible or not, that is, whether all our knowing has a firm ground which can be discovered (*erkennbar*), or whether on the contrary it . . . rests ultimately on nothing, or at least nothing *for us*. But if our knowing is to have a ground for us, then this problem must admit of solution and there must be a science in which it is solved. And [conversely] if there is such a science, then our knowing has a ground which can be discovered. Hence, before the investigation we can say nothing as to the nature of our knowing, as to whether it has or has not a ground. The possibility of the requisite science can be shown only through its actuality."¹ But while Fichte admits that the correctness of his assumption can be shown only by the actual discovery of the supreme unity, he by no means accepts the counter-proposition that the failure to make the discovery indicates that experience has no unitary principle or even that we are incapable of finding it. "If we do not succeed" in discovering it, one of two things must be true. "Either there is no such system" as we have supposed, in human knowing, "or we ourselves have simply failed to find it and must leave the discovery to more fortunate successors. To jump at the conclusion that there is no such system, simply because *we* have not found it is to make an assumption which does not deserve to be dignified with a serious refutation."²

We see then that Fichte's point of departure from Kant is found in his unwillingness to admit that the dualism in human

¹ *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 43 f.

² *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 54.

consciousness is insurmountable. He refuses to accept the outcome of Kant's argument — the doctrine of the impossibility of metaphysics. No one, he insists, can be justified in asserting that philosophy is impossible. The most that one has a right to say, is that he himself has not succeeded in working out a satisfactory philosophical theory ; but that any one should presume to set absolute bounds for the human reason is preposterous. And in the courage of this belief, Fichte presses on in quest of the great solution which perhaps thought may never attain, but which at least it must ever seek.

And the clue which guides him in his search was given him by the very master who has told us that all search is vain. Not only did Kant, by pointing out the dualism of human thought, set the problem for his successors, but the very means which he took for emphasizing this dualism seems to have suggested to Fichte the way of escape. When Kant wishes to show us how poor a thing our knowledge is, he does it by contrasting the actual attainment with the ideal. What we need in order that the ideal of thought may be realized, or as Kant would put it, that we may attain to perfect cognition, is a self-consciousness which, besides being a unitary principle, as our self-consciousness is, shall also be a creative principle, an understanding whose very act of unifying brings into being a manifold of perception. Our self-consciousness is not thus creative ; on the contrary, the *I think* is "the poorest of all ideas."¹ The vast difference between *intellektuelle Anschauung* and our human way of thinking should suffice to convince us that the barriers within which our thought is confined, are insurmountable.

This comparison with the ideal, which seems to Kant so disastrous for self-consciousness, suggests to Fichte the key to the solution of his problem. For this ideal which lies so far removed, is yet the ideal of *human thought*, is the principle which must guide this thought through all its development — is indeed its real essence, its highest truth. Or, to put the matter otherwise, we may say that the ideal — the Idea of the Ego — is that very creative principle for which we have been looking. "In the

¹ B, 408.

ideal is life forever." It is a motive power, a principle of activity, a productive force. Consciousness, regarded as merely intellectual, is bound in the fetters of an inevitable dualism ; to the 'Ego as intelligence' a Non-Ego is ever opposed. But if you regard consciousness merely in this way, you mistake its true nature. It has also an ideal side, an aspect of infinity ; and he who would know the full meaning of experience must not ignore this aspect.

Thus we see that the means by which Fichte effected his transformation of Kant's doctrine is a simple one : it consists in pointing out that the chief value of the ideal is not in showing us the defects of human knowledge, but rather in helping us to a better understanding of its real nature. All knowing is a union of form and matter, of subject and object. This union may have various degrees of completeness ; the duality is never quite overcome in actual or individual modes of knowing. The essence of thought, however, consists not in its particularity, but in its absoluteness. The more perfectly the duality has been overcome, the more has the true nature of knowing been manifested. For its true nature is not the actual, but the ideal. Our consciousness becomes intelligible only when it is considered in its relation to absolute knowing.

This insistence that the nature of thought can be understood only when it is interpreted in the light of its ideal, illustrates a difference in method between Kant and Fichte. Kant starts with human experience and finds in it certain oppositions, all of which may be regarded as different phases of the fundamental opposition between content and form. Since he sees no way of rising above these, he accepts them as ultimate. If we hold that thought is essentially dualistic, however, we can never hope to bridge the gulf between it and that ideal unity in which all differences are harmonized. Thus for Kant the relation between experience and its ideal is conceived negatively ; the ideal is the negation of the real. Now Fichte, we have said, sees as plainly as Kant the dualistic aspect of our experience ; but he does not succumb to it so readily. For him a purely negative relation is unthinkable ; the ideal cannot be the negation of the real. And if it be true that by starting with experience we can never show the relation

between it and its ideal, then we must not start with experience. If we cannot explain the ideal by means of the real, we must try to explain the real by means of the ideal.

The way in which Fichte attempts to do this will be described in the next chapter. Here we have simply pointed out the path that he follows in his attempt to pass beyond the barriers which Kant had set for the human mind. The clue which guides him in his search is the thought that the explanation of the real is to be found in the ideal. How he conceives this ideal and how he works out his doctrine of the relation between it and actual experience, must be considered in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORKS OF THE FIRST PERIOD: THE IDEA OF THE EGO.

In the more detailed study of Fichte upon which we are now entering, the two periods of his philosophy will be considered separately. Whether or not the works of the so-called 'second period' represent a change in any of his essential doctrines, they are, at least outwardly, less closely connected with Kant than the earlier writings are; and it will be more convenient for us to study first the works in which the relation to Kant is more obvious. In the present chapter, therefore, we shall confine ourselves in the main to treatises whose date is prior to the year 1800. In Chapter III we shall take up the later works, and in this connection the vexed question of the relation between the two periods will receive some attention.

In the preceding chapter we suggested that one of the great differences between Kant and Fichte lies in the conception of the relation between consciousness and its ideal. For Kant, as we have seen, the relation is a negative one; the ideal is that which consciousness is not and never can be; nay, more, that to which it cannot even approach. Fichte, on the other hand, conceives the relation positively. He maintains that consciousness is not essentially unlike its ideal, but that in spite of its explicit duality, it is implicitly a unity.

Now the task of philosophy, as Fichte understands it, is to explain the dualism of consciousness by showing how it could have arisen from a unitary principle. And the only way in which he can hope to accomplish it is by calling to his aid that very consciousness which is to be explained. If we do not find the clue to the solution of the problem in our own experience, we cannot hope to find it anywhere. The philosopher after all is only a man, and he has nothing to work with, except that which is in some degree accessible to every man.¹

¹ "The finite rational being has nothing outside experience; experience contains the whole matter (*Stoff*) of his thinking. The philosopher of necessity is subject to

We must appeal, then, to experience. But the problem is to find the explanatory ground of experience, and it is involved "in the very concept of ground" that it lies "outside that of which it is the ground." How then can we hope that experience will help us solve our problem? To this question Fichte's answer is that by an act of philosophical reflection we must make an analysis of experience, must separate the elements which are united in it. When we do this we see that experience has two aspects, the objective and the subjective, the thing that is known and the intelligence that knows. "The philosopher can abstract from either one of these and thus . . . raise himself above experience. If he abstracts from the former, he gets, as the explanatory ground of experience, an intelligence *in itself*, that is, intelligence abstracted from its relation to experience; if he abstracts from the latter, he gets a thing *in itself*, that is, in abstraction from the fact that it is presented in experience. The first procedure is called *idealism*; the second, *dogmatism*." ¹

These two are the only philosophical systems which are possible; that is, the only consistent philosophical systems. For since experience has but these two aspects, the subjective and the objective, we can hope to show its essential unity only by exhibiting one of them as a special form of the other; we must either explain intelligence by deducing it from the thing, or explain the thing by deducing it from intelligence. Dogmatism takes as its principle of explanation, the thing-in-itself — mere lifeless being — and seeks to deduce life and consciousness from it. Idealism takes as its principle, intelligence or the Ego, which is an activity. Every consistent philosophy is thus either dogmatism or idealism.

Now Fichte admits that there is no way of proving directly that the true philosophy is idealism rather than dogmatism. "It is a mere presupposition" that intelligence is the explanatory ground of experience, "that from it can be deduced the whole system of our necessary ideas, not only of a world as composed the same conditions" (*Erste Einleitung in die Wissenschaftslehre*, 1797, S. W., I, 425).

¹ *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 424 ff.

of objects which receive their determinations from a subsuming and reflecting judgment, but also of ourselves as free and practical beings, subject to laws."¹ Nor is it possible for the idealist to offer any direct refutation of dogmatism. "Neither of these two systems can directly overthrow the other; for their conflict is with regard to the first principle," which is assumed as a starting-point and is therefore "incapable of deduction."² The only justification that either can have, must consist in the successful accomplishment of its task. But if this is our criterion, then, Fichte claims, we have at the outset a partial justification for idealism. For it can be shown that "dogmatism is utterly incapable of explaining what it has to explain. . . . It must explain the idea, and it undertakes to make this conceivable by a reference to the influence of a thing-in-itself; but in doing this it must not contradict what immediate consciousness tells us with regard to the idea."³ If now we should take the thing as our principle of explanation, all that it could possibly give us is a being, not an idea (not a being for intelligence). "In intelligence — to use a figurative expression — there is a double series, of the being and the contemplating, of the real and the ideal." The most that dogmatism can give us is the "single series of the real."⁴ Dogmatism then is utterly unable to bridge "the gulf between things and ideas. Instead of an explanation it offers a few empty words. . . . It is not a philosophy, but only a feeble affirmation and assertion. Idealism remains as the only possible philosophy."⁵

It will readily be seen that this does not give us a complete defence of idealism. And Fichte himself maintains, as we have said, that the real justification of idealistic philosophy must consist, not in the failure of the rival theory, but in its own success. Nevertheless he feels that even at the outset of the investigation the idealistic hypothesis has the advantage. For it is not condemned by the very nature of the problem as is the case with realism. Dogmatism takes as its starting-point mere lifeless

¹ *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 445.

² *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 429.

³ *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 435.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 436.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 438.

being, the thing-in-itself, and seeks by this principle to explain the existence and nature of consciousness. In so doing, it is attempting the impossible : it is trying to explain thought through something which by hypothesis has no relation to thought. With idealism the case is different. Starting with thought, it does not attempt to deduce a being unrelated to thought, but rather a being which exists simply in and for the thinking process. Thus there is no irreconcilable opposition between the two terms which it seeks to relate ; and even before the attempt is made, there is reason to suppose that the solution of the problem of knowledge must lie in some form of idealism.

Fichte's principle of explanation, then, is the Ego. It is possible, however, to understand this Ego in two different ways : namely, as pure subject (mere form) and as the unity of subject and object (of form and matter). The first interpretation is at least suggested by the discussion in the *Erste Einleitung* which we have just been considering. Consciousness itself contains two principles, a formal and a material. But its material principle is just that which leads us to postulate the existence of the thing-in-itself. Hence when Fichte says that instead of trying to explain the Ego by the thing we should rather seek to explain the thing by the Ego, one can hardly be blamed for supposing him to mean that the subjective principle is ultimate and that the objective is a secondary manifestation of it. And if we interpret the *Wissenschaftslehre* in this way, it seems to be a thorough-going subjective idealism, in which all the material aspect of thought is regarded as mere *Schein*, while the formal aspect alone is taken as real.

But this does not seem to be Fichte's meaning. Our key to the nature of the ultimate principle is consciousness in its *dual* aspect of subject and object. In experience we always find both form and matter, and it is impossible for us to conceive of the one as existing without the other. Each principle has its rights ; to make either the explanatory ground of the other would be to do injustice to this other. Hence the unitary principle which the analysis of consciousness reveals, must not be identified with either one of the two aspects taken alone, but rather with both of

them. Now in consciousness, the two aspects are in opposition ; subject and object are always found together, but they are found opposed. The one principle, then, which is to explain both and to do justice to both, must be that unity of subject and object which is never explicit in consciousness but which is always implied in it.

This, it seems to me, is Fichte's real meaning. There can be little doubt, indeed, that many of his contemporaries interpreted him as teaching that the ultimate principle is the formal or subjective aspect of experience. Schelling, *e. g.*, apparently understood him in this way and hence regarded his own *Identitätsphilosophie* as making a distinct advance upon the Fichtean doctrine by pointing out that the true principle is neither the subjective nor the objective, but the harmony of the two.¹ Fichte himself, however, insists that he has been misunderstood, that his principle is, and always has been, the unity of subject and object. That some of the most emphatic statements of his position are found in his later writings² should not be interpreted as meaning that he held one view in the first period and afterwards, under the influence of Schelling, abandoned it for another.³ Schelling himself may have thought this to be the case. But in the first

¹ See, *e. g.*, a passage in the *Darstellung meines Systems der Philosophie*. After warning the reader not to misunderstand him when he calls his system idealism, Schelling continues as follows : " But now it may very well be that the idealism, *e. g.*, which Fichte at first worked out and which even now he still defends, has a significance quite different from mine. Fichte, *e. g.*, seems to have regarded idealism in a wholly subjective sense, whereas I regard it in an objective sense. Fichte in his idealism seems to have remained at the standpoint of reflection, while I, with my principle of idealism, have placed myself at the standpoint of production. Idealism in the subjective sense might say, ' The Ego is all ' ; idealism in the objective sense would reverse this and say, ' All is the Ego ' " (S. W., Zw. Abthl., II, 109).

² In the second edition of the *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*, *e. g.*, Fichte appends to his discussion of the first *Grundsatz* a note in which he says : " All this means, in other words in which I have since expressed it, that the Ego is necessarily identity of subject and object, subject-object ; and it is this absolutely, without further mediation " (S. W., I, 98, note). The second edition of the *Grundlage* appeared in 1802. For similar statements, see *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre* (1801), S. W., II, 76 ; also the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1804, N. W., II, 96. Cf. with these I. H. Fichte's defence of his father against Schelling's misinterpretation (*J. G. Fichte's Sämmtliche Werke*, Bd. I, *Vorrede des Herausgebers*, S. XV, ff.).

³ If the statements in the second period are more numerous and more emphatic, the reason is not far to seek. From the comments and criticisms of his contempo-

place, as we have just said, Fichte explicitly denies it; and in the second place, we have, in the works of the first period, a few very definite statements which should convince us that even at this time he conceived his ultimate principle as a unity of the subjective and objective aspects of human experience. *E. g.*, in the *Sittenlehre* of 1798, we find the following passages :

"No one can hope to solve the problem of all philosophy . . . who does not find a point in which the objective and the subjective are not separated at all, but are entirely one." The *Wissenschaftslehre* "finds such a point and starts from it. Egohood, intelligence, reason, . . . is this point. This absolute identity of subject and object in the Ego can only be inferred; we can never put our finger upon it as a fact of actual consciousness. Whenever actual consciousness arises, even if it be only the consciousness of self, the separation ensues. I am conscious of myself only in so far as I distinguish myself, the conscious subject, from myself as the object of this consciousness. *The whole mechanism of consciousness is based upon the various aspects of this separation of subjective and objective and of their subsequent union.*"¹

"Knowing and being [the formal element and the material] are separated, not outside consciousness and independently of it, but only in consciousness; their separation is the condition of the possibility of all consciousness. . . . The One which is thus separated is the ground of all consciousness."²

And even in the *Erste Einleitung*, which, as we saw, seemed to suggest the other interpretation, there are indications that Fichte did not mean to represent his ultimate principle as identical with the merely subjective aspect of consciousness. ; The point upon which he is insisting in his discussion is that intelligence, and not the thing, shall be our explanatory ground. But when he tells us that intelligence contains, as it were, a double series, — the real and the ideal, — he is evidently thinking of his ultimate principle as a unity of subject and object. The chief difficulty apparently is one of terminology. Fichte realized that the earlier works had been misunderstood; in the later writings, therefore, he tried to express himself more exactly.

¹ S. W., IV, 1.

² S. W., IV, 5. Cf. S. W., IV, 42, quoted above, p. 16.

nology. Fichte's theory is that consciousness, as an imperfect union of subject and object, points to an ultimate ground in which the union is complete ; but the relation in which his doctrine stood to contemporary thought made it almost inevitable that his terminology should be somewhat confused. His arch-enemy is the conception of the thing-in-itself, and it is in his crusade against this pernicious notion that he unconsciously falls into modes of speech which subject him to misinterpretation. He seems to have used the term 'Non-Ego' in two different senses. Sometimes the word signifies simply the objective principle in consciousness. When this is so, the object is regarded as the correlate of the subject, as standing on the same plane with it, and the finite Ego, or the Ego as intelligence, is merely the subjective principle. In this case, the absolute Ego—the explanatory ground of experience—is thought of as being related just as closely to the Non-Ego as to the individual Ego ; it is the unity of the two. At other times, however, Fichte means by the Non-Ego, not the objective aspect of consciousness, but the thing-in-itself, conceived as existing without any necessary relation to consciousness. In this case, the individual Ego is no longer merely the subjective principle ; it is consciousness in its dual aspect of subject and object. Hence Fichte is now concerned to prove that the Non-Ego does not stand on the same plane with the individual Ego. The Non-Ego, conceived of as existing apart from consciousness, is mere *Schein*, a creature of the imagination, an *Unding* ; consciousness, not the thing-in-itself, gives us the clue to the nature of the ultimate principle.

This interpretation, I think, disposes of the particular difficulty which we have just been considering. So far as we have gone, there seems to be no objection to our saying that Fichte regards his ultimate principle as a unity of form and content, rather than mere form. There is, however, another aspect of the question which calls for more detailed consideration. It appears in connection with Fichte's doctrine of the Idea of the Ego, and before we consider it we must examine that doctrine in some detail.

The development of the conception of the Ego as Idea may best be traced in the *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*

(1794). As we have already seen, Fichte believes that the task of philosophy is to discover the unity which forms the foundation of all experience and to show the relation which it bears to the dualistic nature of our ordinary consciousness. This underlying unity, we have also seen, is to be found by a philosophical analysis of experience. The correct analysis gives us as our ultimate principle, the Ego rather than the thing; an idealistic interpretation of experience is the only one that is possible for us. So much we have learned from the *Erste Einleitung*, which, though published three years later than the *Grundlage*, is really an introduction to it and was written for the purpose of making its meaning clearer.

The *Erste Einleitung* tells us that the ground of experience can be discovered by a philosophical analysis of consciousness; in the *Grundlage* this analysis is performed for us. The book opens with an attempt to get at the nature of the fundamental principle by considering a simple act of judgment. The proposition "*A* is *A*" is the one which Fichte selects; but, he tells us, any affirmative judgment that is universally accepted would serve equally well. What now is involved in this proposition of identity, this assertion that a thing is itself? The ground of the judgment, that which alone enables us to make it, is the fundamental principle of all consciousness, "The Ego originally posits its own being." The line of reasoning by which Fichte seeks to show us that this *Grundsatz* forms the basis of the proposition of identity¹ is somewhat artificial and would perhaps scarcely convince any one who was not already prepared to admit the contention. We may therefore pass over the set argument and content ourselves with dwelling for a little time on the essential meaning of the assertion that all affirmative judgment implies the self-positing of the Ego.

Since Kant's deduction of the categories from the transcendental unity of apperception, the thought that every act of judgment involves the assertion of the self has been familiar to students of philosophy. It seems, however, that Kant himself failed to grasp the whole meaning of his doctrine. The task of discovering its full significance remained for his successors; and

¹ S. W., I, 92 ff.

all the forms of post-Kantian idealism may be regarded as so many attempts to get a clearer conception of the nature of judgment in its relation to the self. As Fichte points out, however, Kant was not the first to have a glimpse of this truth. Descartes's "Cogito, ergo sum," though it is an inadequate formulation and though Descartes himself seems quite unconscious of its deeper significance, is yet a gleam of real light. The "Cogito, ergo sum," Fichte tells us, regarded "not as minor premise and conclusion of a syllogism, but . . . as immediate fact of consciousness," is at bottom simply a recognition of that self-assertion of the Ego which is involved in all thinking.¹

The fuller meaning of the doctrine may be seen when we consider Fichte's statement that this self-affirmation of the Ego gives us the category of reality. The declaration that something is, or is real, has no meaning save as it embodies an implicit reference to the self for which this something is real. He who hesitates to affirm the existence of himself² cannot logically affirm anything; for in the act of asserting anything whatever about any subject, he inevitably proclaims the existence of his own consciousness.

Self-consciousness then, as Descartes dimly saw, must be our starting-point. But self-consciousness as revealed to us in judgment, the primary intellectual act, involves something more than mere consciousness of self. Judgment has not only an affirmative, but also a negative aspect. In the negative judgment—for example, "*A* is not not-*A*"—this second aspect of consciousness is revealed. It is expressed in our second *Grundsatz*, which forms the basis of all negative judgment, "To the Ego a Non-Ego is absolutely opposed."³ This *Grundsatz* is in a sense subordinate to the first one. The first is unconditioned

¹ S. W., I, 99 f.

² In this discussion, I mean to use the terms 'self' and 'existence of self' without any implication of a substantial self which is supposed to support and possess consciousness. There seems to be no need, either in psychology or in metaphysics, of asserting the existence of such a self, either as immediate datum of consciousness or as necessary inference from the facts of consciousness. The self, as I use the term, is identical with consciousness or experience; it has just as much substantiality and unity as experience has—so much and no more.

³ S. W., I, 104.

both in form and content. The second is unconditioned in form, but conditioned in content — derives its content from the first. It is unconditioned in form because negation is in a sense as truly a primary act of consciousness as affirmation is ; it is conditioned in content because negation is *negation* only as compared with affirmation. "If the consciousness of the first act did not accompany the consciousness of the second, then the second positing (*Setzen*) would not be an opposing (*Gegensetzen*), but merely a positing. It first becomes an opposing through reference to a positing."¹

Negation then, as well as affirmation, is a fundamental aspect of judgment. If we consider the matter a little, we see that any judgment, when taken in its full meaning, involves both assertion and denial. The simplest affirmation that we can make brings with it an implied negation. All judgment is at once inclusive and exclusive : to declare that a thing is *this*, is to declare that it is not *that*.² It should be noted, however, that affirmation is *ordinarily* more effective than negation.³ To say that a particular flower *is not* a Crucifer is to exclude one possibility, but to leave many others open ; to say that it *is* Composite is to destroy at one blow a host of possibilities. This greater effectiveness of the affirmative judgment justifies us in assenting to Fichte's proposition that the fundamental characteristic of thought is affirmation.

But when we have shown that consciousness involves both

¹ S. W., I, 103.

² This view of the matter, as is readily seen, rests upon the doctrine that every judgment involves some approach to disjunction. And for my own part I cannot see how any other doctrine is tenable. For if my assertion that *A* is *B* does not imply a denial that *A* is something else, *e. g.*, *C*, then it tells us nothing whatever and thus is not a judgment. Cf. Bosanquet, *Logic or the Morphology of Knowledge* (Oxford, 1883), I, 340. "The whole assertory state within which the simpler forms of judgment, at any rate from Comparison upwards, have their import, is from the first of a disjunctive nature." Professor Bosanquet guards his statement by excluding what he calls the 'judgment of quality,' but I think he would admit that even this, the simplest type of judgment, has an aspect of negation. For in another passage he tells us that negation "has from the first its essential place in knowledge" (*Op. cit.*, I, 297).

³ When we have a perfect disjunction, consisting of only two members, negation is of course as effective as affirmation. But in this case the negation derives its effectiveness in large measure from the disjunction upon which it rests ; and this disjunction, while it of course involves negation, is still predominantly affirmative.

affirmation and negation, we have not even yet disclosed its full nature. For these two moments, as Fichte points out, are apparently in utter opposition to each other. On the one hand we have bare identity; the Ego posits itself. On the other hand we have bare contradiction; to the Ego a Non-Ego is absolutely opposed. Now if consciousness is to be understood, this contradiction between its two moments must, in some way or other, be resolved. For if affirmation and negation are both aspects of experience, their opposition cannot be ultimate. That they are aspects of one reality and that therefore they cannot be in absolute contradiction, Fichte indicates in his third *Grundsatz*, "In the Ego I oppose to the divisible Ego a divisible Non-Ego";¹ that is, being interpreted, the opposition is an opposition *within* consciousness and not an opposition *to* consciousness — one which consciousness itself creates, not one which is thrust upon it by something external.

In these three propositions which Fichte develops at the outset of his study, we have the three moments which are involved in every act of thought — thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. This dialectic nature of thought, which Hegel makes the basis of his system, is thus recognized by Fichte, though he does not work it out so fully as his successor did.

But the postulation of this fundamental synthesis is little more than a recognition that Ego and Non-Ego are correlative aspects of consciousness and that hence they must be harmonized. *How* they are to be harmonized, still remains to be shown; and this is the task of the rest of the *Grundlage*. In general, Fichte's method consists in bringing to light one opposition after another and in resolving these oppositions by a succession of syntheses. Thus in this first synthesis, by which he seeks to reconcile Ego and Non-Ego, he finds yet other oppositions. This third *Grundsatz* involves two opposed propositions: (1) "The Ego posits the Non-Ego as determined by the Ego" and (2) "The Ego posits itself as determined by the Non-Ego."² The first of these, Fichte tells us, forms the basis of the practical part of the *Wissenschaftslehre*; the second, the basis of the theoretical part. This

¹ S. W., I, 110.

² S. W., I, 125 f.

opposition between the practical and theoretical aspects of consciousness must of course, in due time, be resolved by synthesis ; but Fichte passes by this task for the present and proceeds instead to develop the theoretical part of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, from the proposition, "The Ego posits itself as determined by the Non-Ego."

To follow, through all its windings, this involved and somewhat artificial discussion would be a wearisome task and perhaps of comparatively little value. We may therefore pass over it with a brief statement. In this proposition upon which the theoretical *Wissenschaftslehre* rests, we still have an opposition. For accordingly as we emphasize the one or the other phrase in it, we represent the Ego as passive or as active. If we say, "*The Ego posits itself* as determined by the Non-Ego," we emphasize its activity. But if we say, "The Ego posits itself as *determined by the Non-Ego*," we emphasize its passivity. Both these aspects of the Ego — its activity and its passivity — are involved in our proposition, and thus we have once more a contradiction to be removed. Fichte's solution, if we pass over some intermediate steps, is this. We must suppose that the activity of the Ego has two opposite directions — one centrifugal or outward-going, the other centripetal. The infinite outward-going activity (production) receives a check (*Anstoss*) and in consequence is driven back upon itself (reflection). This double process of production and reflection, repeated in successively higher stages, gives rise to the various forms — sensation, perception, imagination, conception, and reasoning. In these successive products of reflection, the Non-Ego comes into view, first as mere sensation which is not referred to an object, and later as brought under a concept and regarded as the cause of our perception. Finally in reason, the last stage of all, the Non-Ego is recognized by the Ego as its own product ; all determination of the Ego is seen to be self-determination.

Thus Fichte overcomes the difficulty in the proposition, "The Ego posits itself as determined by the Non-Ego." The limitation of the Ego by the Non-Ego is really a limitation by itself. The Non-Ego is simply the product which comes into being in

this process of self-limitation. The entire realm of consciousness, in its objective as well as its subjective aspect, is seen to be grounded in the activity of the Ego. There is one point, however, which the theoretical *Wissenschaftslehre* leaves unexplained; this is the *Anstoss*. Why is it that the Ego is driven back upon itself and that thus its activity assumes the opposite direction? This question the theoretical *Wissenschaftslehre* is powerless to answer; for explanation we must turn to the practical *Wissenschaftslehre*.

The practical *Wissenschaftslehre*, as we have said, starts with the proposition, "The Ego posits itself as determining the Non-Ego." This involves an antithesis between the Ego as intelligence and the Ego as absolute. The Ego regarded as absolute is seen to be wholly self-sufficient. It is the self-positing, the self-dependent — the Ego of the first *Grundsatz*. But the Ego regarded as intelligence, while in one sense self-dependent, in another sense is not so. If it is intelligence, then it is indeed the source of its determinations; perception, conception, reasoning, are the products of its own activity. The whole external world, if it is to exist, must be developed by the Ego from within itself, cannot conceivably be the product of an external force. But *that* the Ego shall be intelligence, *that* there shall be an external world, seems to be posited, not by the Ego itself, but by something outside it. To quote Fichte's own words, "The *mode* and *manner* of representing (*Vorstellen*) in general, is certainly through the Ego; but *that* the Ego shall represent at all is determined, as we have seen, not by it but by something outside it. That is, we are not able to think the representation possible in any other way than by the presupposition that the undetermined, infinite, outward-going activity of the Ego should receive a check. Hence the Ego, as *intelligence in general*, is *dependent* upon an undetermined and as yet indeterminable Non-Ego [that is, the *Anstoss*] and only through and by means of such a Non-Ego is it intelligence."¹ We have then an opposition between the absolute Ego, which is wholly self-dependent, and the Ego as intelligence, which is self-dependent as to its *how*,

¹ S. W., I, 248.

while for its *that* it depends upon the *Anstoss*. This is the fundamental antithesis which the practical *Wissenschaftslehre* has to solve.

Here again Fichte gives us a long and involved discussion, which we can condense into a comparatively brief statement. In the first place it should be understood that the opposition which we have, is an opposition *within* the Ego. The Ego as intelligence and the Ego as absolute (or as Fichte often calls them, the finite and the infinite Ego) are really not two, but one; the opposition is between two aspects of the one Ego. Now since an absolute opposition within the one Ego is impossible, since the Ego cannot be in the same sense finite and infinite, we must suppose that in one sense it is infinite and in another finite. How can this be? How can the apparent inner contradiction be removed?

The key to the solution of the difficulty is to be found in the concept of the ideal. "The Ego is infinite" in that it "strives to be infinite,"¹ that it sets up for itself an infinite ideal; it is finite in that it never fully attains the ideal. If we interpret the Ego in this way, if we regard not the *Is* (*das Sein*), but the *Is-to-be* (*das Sollen*) as the clue to its nature, we shall get rid of our difficulty with the *Anstoss*. We saw that the *Anstoss* determines not the *how*, but the *that* of the Ego as intelligence; that is, we had to assume the *Anstoss* in order to answer the question why there is an external world, why the infinite Ego should not remain locked within its calm self-sufficiency instead of manifesting itself in the finite consciousness. The only answer which the theoretical *Wissenschaftslehre* could give, was an appeal to the *Anstoss*. The infinite activity of the Ego is checked, and its rebound upon itself brings into being the external world and the finite subject. But this explanation does not suffice; for it leaves the *Anstoss* as something foreign to the Ego, as a veritable *Ding an sich*. If we are to fulfil the task of philosophy, to exhibit all phases of experience as manifestations of a unitary principle, we must somehow get the *Anstoss* within the Ego, must show that the Ego itself furnishes the *that* of the external world. This the

¹ S. W., I, 270.

concept of the ideal enables us to do. The limitation of the Ego is a self-limitation. And the Ego limits itself, not because some external influence urges it to do so, but because of an inward impelling force, the Idea of the Ego. The Ego limits itself in order that it may become an Ego,¹ limits itself because only in and through self-limitation can it attain the ideal of ego-hood. The absolute Ego, the mere infinite activity, is not really an Ego; it is "nothing *for itself*" and is therefore "nothing."² In order that it may be an Ego — that is, in order that it may really be at all — it must set bounds to itself, must determine itself; and the outcome of its self-determination is the world of conscious individuality, the world in which Ego and Non-Ego seem opposed to each other.

Here we have exhibited the teleological aspect of Fichte's philosophy. The explanation of the problems of thought is to be found in the concept of the ideal. This world is, because the Idea of the Ego is; it comes into being through the creative power of the Idea. The *Ought-to-be* is the basis and explanatory ground of the *Is*.

In this doctrine we have a fuller development of a tendency which appears in Kant, but which in his case is held in check by other tendencies. In the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* the Ideas of God, freedom, and immortality are declared to be, not constitutive, but merely regulative principles. In the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* this position is somewhat modified by the supreme importance which is attributed to the moral law. In his exaltation of the practical reason Kant gives a suggestion which strongly appealed to Fichte and which doubtless had much to do with the development of his doctrines. Kant himself, however, holding steadfastly to his theory of the fundamental opposition between the content and form of experience, does not attempt to make the moral law a constitutive principle for the explanation of this experience. And in like manner, in the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*, he makes the principle of teleology merely regulative. It was reserved for Fichte to work out the suggestion of the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, to show that in the concept of the ideal we have the explanatory ground of the world-process.

¹ S. W., I, 276.

² S. W., I, 264.

It should be noted, however, that the Idea of the Ego, which Fichte takes as his ultimate principle, is regarded by him as unattainable. In this respect he fully agrees with Kant; the ideal is infinite and therefore can never be realized by any finite being or system of finite beings. "The highest unity we shall find in the *Wissenschaftslehre*; not however, as something which *is*, but as something which *ought* to be produced through us and yet *cannot* be."¹ "The unity of the pure spirit is for me *unattainable ideal*; final purpose, but one which never becomes actual."² But although Fichte believes that the ideal can never be realized, there is still an important difference between his conception of its relation to consciousness and that which was held by Kant. In the preceding chapter we expressed this difference by saying that while Kant conceives the relation as negative, Fichte insists that it is positive. This means for one thing that Fichte believes in the possibility of progress, believes that we can approximate to our ideal even though we can never reach it. The perfect unity of subject and object is the goal of an infinite process and hence can never be realized. Nevertheless the process is a true progress, a movement toward the goal.³

¹ *Grundl. d. ges. W.*, S. W., I, 101.

² *Über die Würde des Menschen*, S. W., I, 416, note.

³ The following citations will support this statement:

"The highest goal of the striving of reason . . . is only Idea; it cannot be thought definitely, and it will never be actual; but we are simply to approximate to it through an infinite progress" (*Zweite Einleitung in die Wissenschaftslehre*, S. W., I, 516).

The ideal "is an infinitely distant goal, never to be attained; hence our task can only be to show *how* one must act in order to *approach* to this goal" (*Die Sittenlehre*, 1798, S. W., IV, 131).

"The final purpose of the rational being is of necessity infinitely distant; it is a goal which he can never attain, but to which, in consequence of his spiritual nature, he must constantly approximate" (*Op. cit.*, S. W., IV, 149. The passages in which this and the two preceding statements occur, are quoted more at length below; cf. pp. 38 ff., 48 f., 51).

These passages show clearly that Fichte believes in the possibility of progress. One might, however, raise the question whether he has any right to speak of our approximating to an infinitely distant goal. If we say that the point which has been reached at a given stage in the progress is separated from the end by an infinite distance, and if we conceive of this infinite distance as a quantity greater than any assignable quantity, then in one sense, we must certainly admit, no approximation is possible. For however far we may travel, we shall still be separated from the goal by an infinite distance. This might in itself suggest that the conception of infinity as

But more than this is implied in Fichte's conception of the relation between human experience and its ideal. When we say that the relation is positive rather than negative, we mean not simply that consciousness may gradually approach its ideal; we mean also that in a sense it already *is* the ideal. The Idea of the Ego is not transcendent, but immanent — not so much a goal outside thought which attracts it, as a moving principle within, which impels it forward. "The Ego is only that which it posits itself as being. 'It is infinite' means 'It posits itself as infinite, *determines* itself by the predicate of infinitude.'"¹ "The idea of such an infinity to be completed hovers before us and is contained in the innermost depths of our nature."²

In the *Zweite Einleitung* there is a passage which throws much light upon the conception of the Ego as Idea and its relation to finite consciousness. We must carefully distinguish, Fichte tells us, between two conceptions, "the Ego as *intellektuelle Anschauung*, from which the *Wissenschaftslehre* starts, and the Ego as

quantitative is not an altogether satisfactory one, that it is at best one-sided and misleading. Without trying to develop this thought, however, we may content ourselves with pointing out that the very nature of measurement involves reference to the finite, rather than to the infinite, — in the sense in which we are here using the terms, — but that this does not compel us to reject the concept of measurement as invalid or meaningless. Progress implies measurement, and measurement in turn implies finitude. But for all that, progress may be real — real just in so far as measurement and the measured (the finite) are real. Thus from the point of view of the goal, which is infinitely removed, no approximation, no progress, is possible; but from the point of view of the finite subject, progress is possible. Any finite distance is indeed negligible as compared with an infinite distance, but it is none the less an element of the real world.

This is practically the way in which Fichte himself solves the difficulty. In the *Sittenlehre* of 1798 there is an interesting passage in which he discusses this very question. "How, men ask, can one come nearer to an infinite goal? Does not every finite quantity disappear into nothingness when set over against infinity? But when men bring forward this difficulty, one might suppose that they were talking about infinity as a thing-in-itself. *I approximate for myself.* But I can never grasp infinity; hence I always have my eyes fixed upon a *definite* goal, to which without doubt I can come nearer. But after it has been attained, then, because of the consequent enlargement of my whole nature and thus of my insight, my goal may be pushed just so much farther beyond me; and thus from this *general* point of view, I never come nearer to the infinite" (S. W., IV, 150).

¹ *Grundl. d. ges. W.*, S. W., I, 214. This passage is quoted at greater length below, p. 44.

² *Op. cit.*, S. W., I, 270.

Idea, with which it ends. In the Ego as *intellektuelle Anschauung* there lies merely the form of egohood, the act which returns into itself, which indeed also becomes its own content. . . . In this form the Ego is, only *for the philosopher*, and it is by grasping this conception that one rises to the philosophical point of view. The Ego as Idea [on the other hand] is present (*vorhanden*) *for the Ego* itself, which the philosopher studies. . . . The Ego as Idea is the rational being, first in so far as this being has perfectly manifested in himself the universal reason, in so far as he is actually rational, and nothing but rational, in so far then as he has ceased to be an individual — for it is only through the limitations of sense that he is an individual. Again [the Ego as Idea is the rational being], in so far as this being has fully realized reason outside himself in the world, which thus also is posited in this Idea. The world remains posited in this Idea as world in general, as substrate governed by certain definite laws of mechanisms and organisms; but these laws throughout their whole range are fitted to express the final purpose of reason. The Idea of the Ego has only this in common with the Ego as *Anschauung*, that in neither of them is the Ego conceived as individual; it is not so conceived in the latter because in it egohood is not yet narrowed down (*bestimmt*) to individuality; nor in the former because in it, through development according to universal laws, individuality has disappeared. But the two differ in this, that in the Ego as *Anschauung* we have only the form of the Ego and take no account of a proper content (*Material*) for this Ego, — a content which is thinkable only through the Ego's thinking of a world, — whereas in the Ego as Idea the complete matter (*Materie*) of egohood is thought. From the first [the Ego as *Anschauung*], all philosophy starts, finding in it its fundamental concept. To the second [theoretical] philosophy does not extend; only in its practical part can this Idea be set up as the highest goal of the striving of reason. The first, as we said, is original *Anschauung* and becomes concept in the way which we have already sufficiently described [that is, through philosophical reflection]. The second is only Idea; it cannot be thought definitely, and it will

never be actual ; but we are simply to approximate to it through an infinite progress."¹

In this passage we have the most complete expression that Fichte gives us of his conception of the Ego as self-developing form. The Ego as *intellektuelle Anschauung*,² the absolute Ego

¹ S. W., I, 515 f.

² It is hardly necessary to point out that Fichte uses the term *intellektuelle Anschauung* in a different sense from that in which Kant employed it. With Fichte the phrase seems to have two significations, which are, however, closely connected. Sometimes, as in the passage just quoted, *intellektuelle Anschauung* seems to be thought of as the form which has not yet unfolded its content, as the still undifferentiated unity which is the basis of experience ; here it is identical with the absolute Ego of the *Grundlage*. At other times, however, Fichte speaks of it as the act by which we become conscious of this underlying unity (See, e. g., *Zweite Einleitung*, S. W., I, 463, and *Versuch einer neuen Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre*, S. W., I, 526 ff.). In neither case is the term used in the Kantian sense ; and in one place Fichte himself points out that the phrase has with him a different meaning from that which Kant gives it. "In the Kantian terminology," he says, "all perception is directed toward a being, something which is posited, something which persists. Intellectual perception would therefore be immediate consciousness of a non-sensuous being, immediate consciousness of the thing-in-itself, and that too through mere thinking ; thus it would be a production of the thing-in-itself through the concept. . . . But the *Wissenschaftslehre* . . . knows . . . that this is an utterly irrational conception. . . . Intellectual perception in the Kantian sense is for it an *Unding*, which escapes from our grasp as soon as we try to think it and which is not even worthy of a name. The intellectual perception of which the *Wissenschaftslehre* speaks, is directed not toward a being, but toward an acting, and it is not even mentioned by Kant, except, if you will have it so, in the phrase 'pure apperception.'" But its parallel really exists in Kant's categorical imperative. "Our consciousness" of the categorical imperative is "intellectual perception" (*Zweite Einleitung*, S. W., I, 471 f.).

From this passage it appears, as Thiele points out (*Op. cit.*, 173, 182), that Fichte does not recognize the higher form of Kant's doctrine of intellectual perception. What he has in mind here is *intellektuelle Anschauung* as knowledge of things-in-themselves. And since the thing-in-itself is for him an *Unding*, we can readily see why he applies this name to Kant's intellectual perception. That the concept of *intellektuelle Anschauung* must be formed on the analogy of our own self-consciousness he clearly recognizes, but he fails to see that this very conception is found in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Certainly Kant's *intellektuelle Anschauung*, regarded as a self-consciousness in whose very act of unity the manifold content is given, is not an *Unding* for Fichte. Its parallel in the *Wissenschaftslehre*, however, is not the Ego as *intellektuelle Anschauung*, but the Ego as *Idea*.

Thiele, not content with defending Kant against Fichte's criticisms, makes the countercharge that Fichte himself has never risen to the highest conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung* (*Op. cit.*, 178 ff.). This charge, it seems to me, indicates some misunderstanding of the relation between Kant and Fichte. It is true that for Fichte intellectual perception does not represent the perfect unity of form and con-

of the *Grundlage*, is form whose content has not yet become explicit ; hence Fichte speaks of it as mere form. But it is evident that the content which it gains in the process of development does not come to it from without. As Fichte himself says, "the form of egohood, the act which returns into itself . . . becomes its own content." In short we have here the germs of Hegel's conception of the Idea which realizes itself through successively higher stages, the universal which develops by becoming more concrete.

In this doctrine, human experience seems to have an intermediate position between the form which has as yet no explicit content and the fully developed form, in which the content has been perfectly explicated. This enables us to understand the dualism which is so apparent in experience. In the process of development the content is set over against the form, from which it has proceeded and with which it is really identical. This opposition of form and matter is essential if their higher unity is ever to be made manifest. In order that the apparently empty identity may show itself as identity in difference, the difference must be emphasized. In order that the Ego may be *for itself* and thus be a true Ego, it must oppose to itself a Non-Ego. Thus human consciousness, in spite of its seeming dualism, is a necessary stage in the realization of the ideal unity of content and form.

We have now before us in its general outlines, Fichte's conception of his fundamental principle. In the earlier part of the *Grundlage* it is described as the absolute Ego, but as the argu-

ment, but rather form whose content is only implicit. But in the Ego as Idea we have, as has just been said, the conception which corresponds to the highest phase of Kant's doctrine. Apparently Thiele would reply to this that according to Fichte the Idea is not and cannot be realized. "In the *Ought*," he says, "the opposition between positing (knowing) and posited (the known) is still stronger" (*Op. cit.*, 179). Believing, as he does, that Kant finds in the 'I think' an actual unity of form and content, he is disposed to censure Fichte because no such perfect unity is recognized by the *Wissenschaftslehre* as actual. In the Appendix, Note B, I have given my reasons for dissenting from Thiele's interpretation of Kant's 'I think.' If these are accepted, one must admit, it seems to me, not only that Fichte's conception of the Ego as Idea is a close parallel to the highest form of Kant's *intellektuelle Anschauung*, but also that Fichte, in representing the relation between human experience and its ideal as positive rather than negative, reaches a higher position than that held by Kant.

ment advances, we see that this conception is not adequate to explain the facts of experience. If the ultimate principle had no other aspect than that self-contained independence which is symbolized by the absolute Ego, then the nature of consciousness, with its opposition of Ego and Non-Ego, could be made intelligible only by the assumption of the *Anstoss* and the consequent admission of dualism. But when the concept of the absolute Ego is transformed into that of the Ego as Idea, the difficulty with regard to the *Anstoss* disappears. The fundamental principle is now seen to be, not a mere undetermined form — as such it would *be* nothing and *explain* nothing — but a form which develops its content through the act of self-limitation. Not the undetermined, but the self-determined, is the true infinite.

We may now return to the question that we were considering in the early part of the chapter — the question, that is, whether Fichte conceives his ultimate principle as mere form, or as a unity of form and content. In our discussion of the passage in the *Erste Einleitung* we were disposed to maintain that there is nothing in it to prevent us from assuming that he regards his principle as such a unity. But we pointed out at the time that the question has another aspect, which appears in connection with the doctrine of the Ego as Idea.

Our study of the *Grundlage* has shown us that the unitary principle which is described in the *Erste Einleitung* is an *ideal* principle. In the realm of the actual we always find opposition ; both in the intellectual and in the moral life, subject and object are set over against each other, and in actual experience this opposition can never be fully overcome. But in all our intellectual endeavor, in all our moral striving, we are guided by the ideal of unity. This is the true ground of consciousness ; this it is which brings into existence, which makes actual, the world of the finite being and his infinite striving. And now that we have before us this conception of the Ego as Idea, the question whether the fundamental principle is a perfect unity of subject and object meets us in a new guise. The ultimate ground of all reality is not something which is actually existent, but an ideal

that *is to be realized*. Hence the question as to the unity of the principle now becomes the question, what sort of unity is it toward which the world-process is striving? How does Fichte conceive the ideal itself? Is *it* pure form, or is it a unity of form and content? As long as there is a world of conscious beings (and since the goal is infinitely distant, there will always be such a world), so long there will be both subject and object. But if the unattainable goal could be attained, what would it be? Would it be mere form, devoid of content, or would it be an organic unity of form and matter?

If we study the works of the first period with reference to this question, we seem to find in them traces of two different conceptions of the ideal. Sometimes, apparently, Fichte thinks of it as mere form and at other times as a union of form and content. In the *Grundlage*, as we have seen, the dualism of subject and object, which at first appears as an opposition of Ego and Non-Ego, soon develops into an opposition between the Ego as infinite and the Ego as finite. Now if we believe that finite and infinite are aspects which are essentially opposed, then the unity which we regard as the ideal of thought must be conceived as purely formal; but if on the other hand we maintain that the opposition is not irreconcilable, our ideal becomes an organic unity of content and form. In the one case the goal of the endless progress is conceived as the annihilation of content, the complete absorption of the finite into the infinite; in the other, as the perfect interpenetration of form and content, as the finite which has developed into the infinite, the infinite which is fully realized in the finite.

There are some indications in the *Grundlage* of a tendency to adopt the first alternative — to emphasize the opposition of finite and infinite and thus to suggest that the unattainable ideal of experience is empty form. "Both Ego and Non-Ego, as put upon the same plane (*gleichgesetzt*) and opposed to each other, through the concept of mutual limitation, are something (accidents) in the Ego as divisible substance, are posited by the Ego as the absolute subject, which is incapable of limitation, to which nothing is like and nothing is opposed."¹ And again: "In so

¹S. W., I, 119.

far as the Ego is limited by the Non-Ego, it is finite; but in itself, as it is posited by its own absolute activity, it is infinite. These two aspects, the infinity and the finitude, must be united. But such a union is inherently impossible. For a long while the strife is settled by mediation; the infinite limits the finite. But at length, when the utter impossibility of the desired union is seen, the finitude must be utterly destroyed (*aufgehoben*). All boundaries must disappear; the infinite Ego alone must remain as One and as All."¹

These passages give the best expression which I have found in the *Grundlage* of the tendency to oppose the finite and the infinite aspects of the Ego. On the other hand we have several emphatic statements in favor of the higher conception of the ideal. "These two [the finite and the infinite aspects of the Ego] must be one and the same. Briefly put, this means: *no infinity, no limitation; no limitation, no infinity; infinity and limitation are united in one and the same synthesis*. If the activity of the Ego did not go out toward infinity, then the Ego could not limit this its activity; it could not set bounds for it, as it nevertheless is to do. . . . Furthermore if the Ego did not limit itself, it would not be infinite. The Ego is only that which it posits itself as being. 'It is infinite,' means 'It posits itself as infinite, *determines* itself by the predicate of infinitude.' Thus it limits itself (the Ego) as substratum of the infinitude."² "Without this reference" to an object "there would be no object for the Ego, but the Ego would be all in all and for this very reason . . . nothing."³ "The absolute Ego is simply like itself; all within it is one and the same Ego and belongs (if we may express ourselves so improperly) to one and the same Ego; there is nothing here to distinguish, no manifold; the Ego is all and is nothing, because it is nothing *for itself*, because no positing and no posited can be distinguished in it."⁴

Thus we see that both interpretations of the ideal seem to find support in the *Grundlage*, that some passages suggest that Fichte thought of the goal of the infinite process as empty form, while

¹ S. W., I, 144.

³ S. W., I, 261.

² S. W., I, 214.

⁴ S. W., I, 264.

others seem to show that he conceived it as the organic unity of form and content. At this point we may pause for a moment to compare his position with that of Kant. In the preceding chapter, we saw that in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* Kant conceives of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as a unity of form and matter but that his doctrine has two main phases. In one of these (*intellektuelle Anschauung* as passive apprehension of things-in-themselves) the unity is artificial; in the other (*intellektuelle Anschauung* as a pure self-consciousness which is its own content) it is organic. In both cases, however, finite consciousness, with its inherent dualism, is utterly opposed to the ideal, can never approximate to it in the least degree. In the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* somewhat different tendencies were revealed. In the moral world Kant seems to recognize the possibility of an approximation; but he conceives the ideal, we saw, either as pure form or (possibly) as an artificial union of form and matter. Hence the advance which we seem to find in the second *Kritik* is made only by lowering the concept of the ideal.

When we compare these results with what we have thus far learned of Fichte's doctrine, we see that the *Grundlage* does not offer a complete parallel either to the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* or to the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*. In two respects Fichte's position in the *Grundlage* represents an advance beyond that of his predecessor. In the first place he does not believe, as Kant does, that human experience is altogether unlike its ideal, cannot approximate to it in the least degree. And in the second place we see no disposition to conceive of the ideal as an artificial union of form and matter. But though in these two respects he avoids the errors into which Kant falls, yet his position is not above criticism. For when we ask whether the ideal is mere form or an organic union of form and content, his answer is not so clear and unhesitating as might be desired; on the contrary he seems to waver between the two positions.

On the whole, it will probably be admitted that the second conception is the more prominent one in the *Grundlage*. Further evidence in favor of this second conception is found in the very emphatic statement in regard to the ideal, in the passage which

we have already quoted from the *Zweite Einleitung*.¹ Here Fichte says explicitly that the Idea of the Ego is not mere form, but that it must be thought as possessing "the complete matter of egohood." Again in the *Recension des Ænesidemus* there is an interesting passage, which, although not quite free from ambiguity, seems on the whole to be in favor of this second conception. "The Ego in the *intellektuelle Anschauung* is . . . absolutely self-subsistent and independent. But the Ego in the empirical consciousness, as intelligence, *is* only in relation to something known (*ein Intelligibles*), and in so far it exists as dependent. Now this Ego which is thus opposed to itself must constitute, not two Egos, but only one, and this is impossible in the degree in which it is required; for dependent and independent are in contradiction to each other. But since the Ego cannot give up its characteristic of absolute self-subsistence, there arises a striving [on its part] to make the thing known dependent upon it, so that thus it may bring the Ego as intelligence into unity with the self-positing Ego. And this is the meaning of the expression, 'The reason is practical.' Reason is not practical in the pure Ego, nor in the Ego as intelligence; it is practical only in so far as it strives to unite these two aspects. . . . This union, an Ego which through its self-determination determines at the same time all the Non-Ego (the Idea of the Deity), is the final goal of the striving. . . . This striving cannot cease until the goal is attained."²

Here the Idea of the Ego is described in almost the same words which Kant so often applies to the *intellektuelle Anschauung*.³ "An Ego which through its self-determination determines at the same time all the Non-Ego" surely cannot be regarded as empty form; clearly the ideal is here conceived as a unity of form and content. The only difficulty in the passage is that Fichte speaks of the impossibility of uniting the two aspects of the Ego because of their contradiction. This might suggest that he inclines here to Kant's theory, that with all our striving,

¹ See above, pp. 38 ff.

² S. W., I, 22 f.

³ E. g., "An understanding in which, through its self-consciousness, all the manifold was also given, would perceive" (B, 135).

we never make any real progress toward the goal. But since this would be wholly at variance with all his other utterances on the subject of progress, we must seek a different explanation of the statement. Either we must say that it is not to be taken quite literally, that Fichte does not regard the contradiction as absolute, or we must suppose that it is the expression of that other tendency which we have found in him—to distinguish sharply between the two aspects of the Ego. In the latter case we must say that the two opposed conceptions of the Ego here find expression in the same passage; but we shall see that this is not the only instance of such inconsistency in Fichte's writings.

If we turn now to the *Sittenlehre* of 1798, we find again indications of the two opposed tendencies in Fichte's thought. Here, as elsewhere, there is no trace of a disposition to conceive the ideal as an artificial union of form and matter. Clearly it would be impossible for Fichte to accept Kant's doctrine of the *summum bonum* as a mechanical union of happiness and virtue, for the simple reason that he utterly rejects the conception of God as the Ruler of the universe. He conceives of God, at least in the works of the first period, to which our attention is at present confined,¹ not as transcendent being, but as the immanent principle of all conscious life. The influence of Kant's ethical doctrine is shown rather in the tendency to think of moral progress as the triumph of form over content. But here too there are traces of the higher conception of the ideal as perfect unity of form and matter.

In the *Sittenlehre*, as in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, the dualism of experience takes the form of an opposition between desire and the moral law. The natural impulse is directed toward enjoyment; the higher impulse toward the self-determining activity of reason. "In so far as man directs his efforts toward mere enjoyment he is dependent upon a *given*, namely upon the presence of the object of his impulse. Thus he is not sufficient

¹ In limiting this statement to the works of the first period, I do not mean to imply that Fichte later conceived of God as a transcendent being; the restriction is made simply because it is sometimes said that he does so conceive of God in the later writings. The correctness of this statement will be considered in the next chapter.

unto himself; the attainment of his purpose depends also upon nature. But in so far as man reflects and thereby becomes subject of consciousness, . . . he becomes an Ego, and there is manifested in him the tendency of reason to determine itself *absolutely through itself*, as subject of consciousness, as intelligence in the highest sense of the word."¹ What now is the relation between these two impulses? Are they to be regarded as mutually exclusive, or does their apparent opposition rest upon an underlying unity? Sometimes Fichte seems to hold that the opposition is fundamental. But if it is, then the harmony that is demanded by the moral law can be reached only by the annihilation of the lower impulse. The impulse toward self-activity is to reign supreme; natural desire must be thwarted, negated, blotted out. "Only the pure absolute activity . . . is the true Ego. To it the impulse is opposed as something foreign; [the impulse] belongs indeed to the Ego, but it is not the Ego. That activity is the Ego."² The pure impulse "does not aim at enjoyment, *of whatever sort it may be*, but rather at regarding all enjoyment as of slight value. It makes enjoyment as enjoyment, contemptible. It aims solely at the asserting of my dignity, which consists in absolute self-subsistence and self-sufficiency."³

In another passage Fichte tells us that the two impulses are not essentially opposed, and yet even here one may have some doubt whether he really has in mind the conception of the perfect unity of form and matter. "My impulse in so far as I am a part of nature, my tendency in so far as I am pure spirit, are they two different impulses? No; from the transcendental point of view both are one and the same original impulse (*Ursprung*), which is my essential nature; only, this impulse is seen from two different sides. In other words, I am subject-object; and my true being consists in the identity and inseparability of

¹ S. W., IV, 130.

² S. W., IV, 140. It should be noticed that the statements which seem to commit Fichte to the theory that the ideal is mere form do not imply that it is essentially unlike consciousness. Here, *e. g.*, Fichte insists that the formal aspect of consciousness is its true nature.

³ S. W., IV, 142. The italics are mine. Cf. the equally strong statement by Kant (H., V, 76), quoted above, p. 11.

these two aspects. If I look at myself as *object*, completely determined by the laws of sensuous perception and of discursive thought, then that which is really my sole impulse becomes for me natural impulse, because from this point of view I myself am nature. If I look at myself as *subject*, then this impulse becomes for me a purely spiritual one, the law of self-dependence. All the phenomena of the Ego depend solely upon the interaction of these two impulses, which is really only the interaction of *one and the same impulse with itself*. Thus at last we have the answer to the question, how so complete an opposition as that which exists between these two impulses can be found in a being that is to be absolutely one. Both impulses are really one; but the whole of egohood rests upon the fact that they appear as different; that which makes the separation between them is reflection. . . . Both impulses [as we have said] constitute one and the same Ego. Then both must be united in the sphere of consciousness. We shall see that in this union the higher impulse must give up the *purity* of its activity (its freedom from determination by an object), while the lower must give up enjoyment as its aim. The result of the union will be *objective* activity, whose final purpose is absolute freedom, absolute independence of all nature. This is an infinitely distant goal, never to be attained; hence our task can only be to show *how* one must act in order to *approach* to this goal. If one considers only the higher faculty of desire, one has a mere *metaphysics of ethics*, which is formal and empty. Only through the synthetic union of the higher with the lower faculty of desire, have we a *theory of ethics* (*Sittenlehre*), which must be real."¹

The interpretation of this passage is not an easy task. In the main it seems to argue against the Kantian conception of morality. The moral law and natural desire are not in fundamental opposition; they *appear* as contradictories, but in reality they are only two different aspects of an underlying unity. But although this certainly seems to be the general drift of the passage, there are one or two sentences that suggest another interpretation. The ideal to which we are to approximate, Fichte tells us, is

¹ S. W., IV, 130 f.

"absolute independence of all nature." The meaning of the statement is not perfectly clear, but one must admit that it at least suggests the thought that if the ideal were ever to be realized we should have the complete annihilation of the lower impulse, and consequently what gives the objective principle its importance is the fact that the ideal never *can* be realized. If this interpretation be correct, one must also suppose that in distinguishing between the *Metaphysik der Sitten* and the *Sittenlehre*, Fichte means that the latter deals with our actual moral experience and the former with the nature of the moral ideal.

There is a similar uncertainty with regard to another discussion.¹ "The natural impulse," Fichte tells us, is directed merely "toward enjoyment for the sake of enjoyment; the pure impulse toward absolute independence . . . of the natural impulse, toward freedom for the sake of freedom." Now if the two impulses are thus opposed, the ideal of morality, it would seem, can consist only in the annihilation of natural desire. Fichte himself puts it thus: the "causality" of the pure impulse "can produce no positive *action* (except the inner one of self-determination), but merely *inaction* (*Unterlassung*). . . . All who have adopted this purely *formal* conception of morality can come, if they are consistent, to nothing else but a continuous *self-abnegation*, utter annihilation and disappearance [of selfhood]. Thus the mystics teach that we must lose ourselves in God." At first Fichte seems dissatisfied with this conception of morality. If the higher impulse is really to be supreme, he says, the causality of freedom must not be merely restrictive and negative. Freedom must be positive, the ground of a real action. Now all actual willing is directed toward objects; but in the world of objects — the sense-world — I can act only by satisfying some natural impulse.² Hence the free will, in order to become actual, must take natural desire as its content. We must not indeed fall into the error of supposing "that the natural impulse as such is the source of will. *I* will, not nature; but so far as the content [of the volition] is concerned, I can will nothing except that which

¹ S. W., IV, 147 ff.

² "Every possible concept of an end is directed toward the satisfaction of a natural impulse" (p. 148).

nature also would will, had nature the power of willing." Thus we are involved in difficulty. Reason demands that the material, as well as the formal, ground of action shall be found in the moral law ; but "as a matter of fact, I never do and never can perform an action which is not demanded by the natural impulse." The only way of solving this difficulty is to say "that the matter of the act must in one and the same action conform both with the pure and with the natural impulse. . . . Just as the two impulses are united in the *Urtrieb* [the ultimate principle], so must they be united in the real action."

The most natural inference from such statements is that Fichte does not regard the two impulses as fundamentally opposed ; but when he goes on to explain his position, the correctness of the inference becomes doubtful. In declaring that the matter of the two impulses must be the same, we mean, he tells us, something like this : "The purpose, the concept, of our acting looks toward complete freedom from nature ; but that the action is still in harmony with natural impulse is the result, not of our freely formed concept of it, but of our limitation. The sole determining ground of the matter of our actions is [the purpose] to shake off our dependence upon nature, although the independence which is demanded is never attained. The pure impulse aims at absolute independence ; the action is in conformity with it if it also aims at independence, that is, *if it forms part of a series through whose continuance the Ego must become independent*. Now . . . the Ego can never become independent so long as it is to be an Ego. Thus the final purpose of the rational being is of necessity infinitely distant ; it is a goal which he can never attain, but to which, in consequence of his spiritual nature, he must constantly approximate. . . . The error of the mystics consists in this, that they represent the goal (which is really infinite, which cannot be attained in any period of time) as capable of being attained in time. The complete annihilation of the individual and his absorption into God, into the absolutely pure form of reason, is certainly the ultimate goal of the finite reason ; only it is not possible in any period of time."

But though the moral ideal seems here to be conceived as the

annihilation of natural desire, yet Fichte points out that in approximating to it we must use this desire as means ; moral action consists in a choice among our natural impulses. In every moral act "there is something which is in harmony" with the ethical end ; this something "is at the same time . . . demanded by the natural impulse ; but it by no means follows that *everything* that the natural impulse demands is conformable" to the law. If we represent by *A, B, C, etc.*, the series of events as it would be if the natural impulse were the sole determining ground, then "by the moral choice of the individual only a part of *B*, perhaps, is . . . made actual." Hence the series is not the same as it would be if nature were left to herself. *B* is changed, and "thereby the natural impulse which succeeds *B* is different" from what it would otherwise have been. Thus "in every possible choice the two impulses meet ; only so can morality become actual." Now in this actual morality the higher impulse is not the pure impulse ; its end (*i. e.*, its conscious or proximate end) is not "absolute independence," but a "particular action." It "gets its matter from the natural impulse ; *i. e.*, the natural impulse, which is synthetically united with it and fused into one with it, is directed toward the same action — at least in part — toward which it is directed. On the other hand, its form is derived solely from the pure impulse. . . . Its ultimate end . . . is complete independence."

Here again we have a passage that is not easy to interpret. That there is some confusion of thought is probable ; but on the other hand it may be urged that there is also much sound psychology. So far as actual moral life is concerned, Fichte sees clearly that it depends constantly upon desire, that if there were no desire there would be no action. Hence moral action must be, not the negation of all desire, but the fulfilment of one desire rather than another. This seems to imply that in the completed moral life, desire would not have been annihilated, but rather perfectly conformed to the law. Thus the ideal would be an organic unity of form and content.

That this conception of the ideal is logically involved in what Fichte says about actual morality, seems clear. If morality in-

volves the harmonizing of desire and the law, and if it is at the same time, as Fichte says it is, an approximation to the ideal, then the ideal must be the perfect union of desire and the law. But although what is said of actual moral life seems to imply that we are to think of the goal of the process as a unity of form and content, it is not certain that Fichte does so conceive it in this discussion. On the contrary, when he speaks of the goal itself, his words suggest that he is thinking of it as pure form; the end toward which we are striving is said to be the complete annihilation of the individual, the absorption of the finite by the infinite. Now it is obvious that if we think of the ethical ideal thus, we cannot without contradiction describe the moral life as Fichte here describes it. If the ideal is pure form, then one of two things must be true—either that actual moral progress consists in the gradual annihilation of desire, or that as a matter of fact there is no moral progress, that approximation to the goal is impossible. The second of these alternatives Fichte would surely reject. He insists always that the real and the ideal do not constitute two utterly distinct realms, but rather that the ideal is the guiding principle in the development of the real. We must, then, adopt the first alternative and say that if the ideal is purely formal, the progress of morality means the gradual crushing out of natural desire.

Apparently, then, what Fichte says about the ideal does not agree very well with his account of the nature of actual morality. In the one case he seems to teach that the ideal is empty form, and in the other he sets forth a theory which logically involves the doctrine that it is a unity of form and content. In short, we find in the *Sittenlehre*, as we have found elsewhere, indications of two different conceptions of the Idea of the Ego.

It remains to consider whether this apparent contradiction can be resolved, or whether it must simply be accepted. In our attempt to answer this question we should be on our guard against undue desire to make Fichte perfectly self-consistent. It is well to bear in mind that the problem of the nature of the ideal was not so well defined for him as it is for us. There are a few questions upon which he is very clear. He never wavers

in his belief that there is a unitary principle in which all the oppositions of human experience may be resolved ; and he is equally confident that we find the clue to the nature of this principle in our own consciousness, that consciousness implies a deeper unity than any which is manifest in it. It is also safe to say that, at least in the first period, he conceives of this unity both as the ideal toward which consciousness is working and as the moving principle in the development. But while he seems clear upon these three points, his doctrine of the nature of the ideal is not so well worked out. Apparently he does not realize that there are two theories between which he must choose, does not definitely raise the question whether the ideal is pure form or unity of form and content. Hence it is that some of his statements suggest one of these doctrines, while some seem to commit him to the other, and that occasionally the opposed statements are even found in the same passage.

But although we need not try to make Fichte perfectly consistent, it may be possible to show that one of these theories more truly represents his thought than the other. There is one point, as yet unnoticed, which suggests that the opposition between the two tendencies is less serious than we might at first suppose. We have seen that the world of consciousness is regarded by Fichte as a necessary stage in the realization of the ideal. Now consciousness, as he conceives it, is inevitably dualistic ; it is possible only through the opposition of a Non-Ego to the Ego. But if we admit this, we must, according to him, admit two other propositions. In the first place we must say that consciousness exists only in the individual, the finite being. For the Ego to which a Non-Ego is opposed, is the Ego as finite intelligence, the Ego as individual, particular, determined. In the second place we must admit that in the fully realized ideal, consciousness will have disappeared ; if consciousness is impossible without opposition, then when the opposition has been fully overcome, consciousness as such can no longer exist.

The bearing of this upon the problem before us is evident. If the attainment of the goal means the disappearance of consciousness, and thus of the Ego as finite individual, it is not hard to

understand why Fichte should speak of the ideal as the absorption of the finite into the infinite. It is at least conceivable that in his descriptions of the infinitely distant goal he wished to suggest merely the transmutation of individual consciousness, and not the disappearance of all content. When he says that the finite must be absorbed into the infinite, he may mean, not that the goal is pure form, but simply that it is a unity in which the differences are perfectly harmonized. Since for him individuality, consciousness, finitude, depend upon the existence of oppositions which are *not* perfectly harmonized, he tells us that the attainment of the goal involves the disappearance of individuality, the lapse of consciousness, the absorption of the finite. But this is not necessarily to say that the goal is mere form. For although conscious individuality will have disappeared, because the end for which it existed has been attained, yet it is not as if it had never been. The end of the process is not identical with the beginning; the unity which has harmonized and resolved its differences is not the same as the unity which has never known difference.

It is possible, I think, to interpret Fichte in this way, to maintain that when he seems to conceive the goal as blank identity, his chief purpose is to emphasize the thought that its attainment would involve the disappearance of the finite individual and thus of consciousness in his sense of the word. And if this were granted, we might try, with the help of this conception, to harmonize the various statements that he makes with regard to the relation between human consciousness and its infinitely distant goal. The ideal, we might say, is always conceived as the unity of form and content, never as empty form. The passages that seem to suggest the latter interpretation are to be understood as asserting simply the ultimate overcoming of finite individuality, not the disappearance of content as such. It would be possible, I say, to interpret Fichte thus, but I am not disposed to go quite to this length. It seems to me far better to admit the existence of the two contradictory tendencies in his thought. For while the suggested interpretation disposes fairly well of the inconsistencies in his descriptions of the ideal, we should still have to explain the passages in which he speaks of the funda-

mental opposition between the two aspects of the Ego. These seem to suggest that he does sometimes tend to think of the ideal as mere form, or at least that he did not see very clearly that it must be a unity of form and content. As we have said, it is doubtful whether he ever really faced the question which we have been considering, whether he saw the problem; and while we are justified in saying that the conception of organic unity is more consistent with the general principles of his philosophy, we may still admit that the notion of blank identity also had some hold upon his thought. This is probably due in large measure to the influence of the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, with its ascetic conception of morality.

The only point, then, upon which I am disposed to insist, is that we should not interpret Fichte as teaching uniformly, or even predominantly, that the goal of the infinite process is blank identity, but that we should rather recognize that he usually rises to the higher conception of a unity which includes and preserves all differences without thereby ceasing to be a perfect unity.

There is, however, one more question that suggests itself in this connection, the question, namely, whether the assertion of the ultimate disappearance of individuality does not *logically involve* the doctrine that the ideal is purely formal. Can we say, as Fichte does, — *ε. g.*, in the passage already quoted from the *Zweite Einleitung*,¹ — that in the Ego as Idea "individuality has disappeared," and yet that in it we have "the complete matter of egohood"? This is an aspect of the problem which calls for careful consideration.

That the doctrine of the purely formal nature of the ideal is logically involved in the assertion of the ultimate disappearance of individuality, is, if I mistake not, the purport of the interesting criticism of Fichte's Idea which is made by Professor Seth Pringle-Pattison. "Morality," he says, "becomes illusory, if it is represented as the pursuit of a goal whose winning would be suicidal to morality itself, and to all conscious life. . . . We may well . . . withdraw our eyes from the goal, if we are not to

¹ See above, pp. 38 ff.

lose heart for the race. Fichte's account, in short, leaves no permanent reality in the universe whatever. The world is hung, as it were, between two vacuities — between the pure or Absolute Ego, on the one hand, which is completely empty apart from the finite individuals whom it constitutes, and 'the Idea of the Ego,' on the other, which is admittedly unattainable, and, if attainable, would be a total blank, the collapse of all conscious life."¹

It may be that I am wrong in interpreting Professor Pringle-Pattison as I have done; but at any rate the objection which I suppose him to be raising is one which might naturally enough be raised, and which it will therefore be well to consider. What Fichte himself would say upon this point, we may infer, I think, from some statements that he made in attempting to defend himself against the charge of atheism. The article which furnished the immediate occasion of the attack upon his orthodoxy is entitled *Über den Grund unseres Glaubens an eine göttliche Weltregierung* (1798). In this work he describes, in somewhat popular form, his conception of the ultimate principle as the ideal of human experience. The principle is designated as 'God,' but it is clear that the term, as here used, is synonymous with 'the Idea of the Ego.' The belief in a divine government of the world, Fichte tells us, cannot be justified from the ordinary point of view, which takes the world as thing-in-itself, independent of consciousness, and yet conceives of God as its creator. But from the transcendental point of view, in which the sense-world is regarded as the manifestation of a spiritual principle, as having existence only in relation to the self, the belief in a divine world-order is intelligible. The moral consciousness, the consciousness of the self as principle of activity, is our starting-point. The sense-world has meaning only as the sphere in which this activity displays itself; it exists simply that the ideal may become real, or as Fichte puts it, that the moral world-order may be established. "Our world is the material of our duty, presented to us in sensuous form."² According to this view God is not substance. The "living and working moral order is itself God; we

¹ *Hegelianism and Personality* (2d edition, Edinburgh, 1893), 58 f.

² "Das vernünftliche Materiale unserer Pflicht" (S. W., V, 185).

need no other God and can conceive no other. Reason does not justify us in going beyond this moral world-order and assuming (by an inference from the grounded to the ground) a particular being (*Wesen*) as its cause."¹

Now this divine order must not be regarded as completely existent; it is a progressively developing order; it is gradually "built up by right-doing." And further, if we conceive God thus, we cannot say that he has personality and consciousness. For I know personality and consciousness only as I see them in myself, the finite rational being. If we attribute these finite predicates to God, we make of him a being like ourselves. "The concept of God as a particular substance is impossible and contradictory."²

As is well known, the publication of this article subjected Fichte to the charge of atheism. Accordingly, in a later discussion, he makes an effort to explain his meaning. In the *Gerichtliche Verantwortung gegen die Anklage des Atheismus* he reverts to his statement that we may not ascribe personality and consciousness to God. He begs his readers not to overlook the distinction on which this assertion rests. "I am speaking," he says, "of *our own conceptual consciousness*, and am pointing out that its concept necessarily involves the notion of limitations, and that therefore this concept of consciousness cannot be applied to God. Only in this respect, only in respect to the limitations and the conceivability which results from the fact of limitation, have I denied that God has consciousness. As to its matter — I am trying to express the inconceivable as well as I can — as to its matter, the Godhead is pure consciousness; it is intelligence, pure intelligence, spiritual life and activity. But to comprehend this intelligence in a concept and to describe the way in which it knows itself and others is utterly impossible."³

From this declaration it would appear that Fichte does not himself believe that the lapse of individual consciousness would involve the disappearance of content. The opposition of subject and object is essential to individuality and consciousness *as he uses the terms*; hence in the perfect unity which is the goal of all

¹ S. W., V, 186.

² S. W., V, 188.

³ S. W., V, 266.

our striving, individuality and consciousness will be done away. But this does not necessarily imply that the goal is a total blank. On the contrary, Fichte would say, it means that the goal is a higher stage than consciousness, a stage in which all content is somehow preserved, although its oppositions have been reconciled. The question of terminology is, of course, of slight importance. We may, if we like, describe this perfect unity as a higher form of consciousness; and in this case we should say that unreconciled oppositions are characteristic, not of consciousness as such, but of its lower form, of human consciousness. Fichte himself, as we have seen, prefers to keep the word 'consciousness' for the stage of unreconciled oppositions, and hence cannot speak of the goal as a higher form of consciousness. But this does not justify us in supposing that he conceives it on the analogy of the unconscious. To think of it thus would be to make it dead being, whereas Fichte always declares that the fundamental principle of his philosophy is life and activity. Evidently his meaning is that in so far as it differs from consciousness, it is not lower, but higher. Experience is steadily working toward the point at which the dualism of subject and object shall be surmounted. If this point were ever reached, we should see beyond the dualism, should apprehend subject and object in their true relations. Now Fichte gives the name of 'consciousness' to the stage in which we do not see beyond the opposition; hence he says that in the completed ideal, consciousness will have disappeared. But this hardly justifies us in maintaining that the goal of the process is a blank identity.

I am aware that this is a point which will not bear much laboring. One accepts it or one does not, but in either case there is little room for discussion. Many will doubtless deny Fichte's right to the concept of what, in default of a better word, we may call 'the supra-conscious.' According to their view there are simply the alternatives of conscious individuality, as we know it, which involves the opposition of subject and object, and the total blank, pure nothingness. Fichte maintains, and it seems to me rightly, that there is a third possibility — a unity of subject and object which yet is not a blank, but which, on the contrary, is richer and fuller than the stage that he calls consciousness.

It must be remembered, however, that this third possibility is only a *possibility for thought*, that, according to Fichte's doctrine, the supra-conscious is an ideal that can never be fully actualized. It does not describe for us a world which now is, or which ever will be, actual; but it does help us to understand, in some measure, the *trend* of the world-process.

It is matter for regret that Fichte never worked out his doctrine of the nature of individuality, so that one might say with some confidence what he means by declaring that the "ultimate goal of the finite reason" is "the complete annihilation of the individual and his absorption into God,"¹ or that the "unattainable ideal" is the inclusion of "all individuals . . . in the one great unity of the pure spirit."² Fortunately, however, we may get from a few passages in the works of the second period, a hint as to the nature of individuality, which may help us to understand better this concept of the ideal. In general, we have limited ourselves, in the present chapter, to the writings of the first period; but in this particular case it seems better to make an exception to our rule and to avail ourselves at once of whatever aid the later writings may furnish. The passages in question are of such a nature that we do not need to discuss the doctrine of the second period in order to understand them; and they are more closely connected with our present problem than with anything that we shall take up in the succeeding chapter.

In the works of the second period in which Fichte develops his *Geschichtsphilosophie*,³ emphasis is laid upon the thought that history involves the constant production of the new.⁴ Whereas the philosophy of the French Enlightenment tended, Fichte thought, to regard history as moving in cycles, so that in any given period the race repeats the experiences of some earlier period,⁵ he himself maintains that history means the continual

¹ *Die Sittenlehre* (1798), S. W., IV, 151.

² *Über die Würde des Menschen*, S. W., I, 416, with note.

³ *Die Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters, Die Reden an die deutsche Nation*, and others.

⁴ This point has been well brought out in the interesting monograph by Natalie Wipplinger, entitled, *Der Entwicklungs-Begriff bei Fichte* (Freiburger Dissertation, Leipzig, 1900). See especially pp. 73 ff.

⁵ Cf., e. g., *Reden an die deutsche Nation*, S. W., VII, 367 f.

appearance of new values, the realization of the Idea in unique forms. "For me," he cries out in the *Bestimmung des Menschen*, "the universe is no longer, as formerly, that circle returning into itself, that play of ceaseless self-repetition, that monster which devours itself only to bring itself to the birth again; before my gaze it is now spiritualized and bears the characteristic stamp of the spirit—constant progress toward the more perfect in a straight line which goes out to infinity."¹

It is in connection with this doctrine of history as the production of the new, that Fichte gives us some hints with regard to the nature of the individual which are of importance for our purpose. In the first place, the mere insistence upon the thought that the Idea of the Ego, or as Fichte more often designates it in the later writings, the divine Idea, is continually realizing itself in *new* forms, seems to show that the goal is not conceived as the disappearance of all content. But this general consideration is supplemented by some definite statements as to the nature of individuality which suggest that the progress of the race does not consist in doing away with individual differences, but rather in developing them. We are told more than once that each person has his peculiar vocation, which no one save himself can perform. "Man ought to be and do something; his life in time ought to leave behind, in the world of spirit, a result that is undying and eternal. The life of every particular individual is to have a particular result, . . . demanded of him alone."² "I, . . . this particular . . . person, am here and am come into existence for this purpose, that in me God's eternal decree as to the world may be thought out in the time-process in a new and as yet wholly unknown way."³

But how are we to reconcile this thought with the doctrine that individuality would disappear if the Idea of the Ego were ever completely actualized? In so far as Fichte answers this question, it is by pointing out that there are two different senses in which we may use the word 'individuality.' The distinction is brought out most clearly in a striking passage in the *Grundzüge*

¹ S. W., II, 317.

² *Das Wesen des Gelehrten* (1805), S. W., VI, 325 f.

³ *Op. cit.*, S. W., VI, 386.

des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters. In many places in this work, Fichte has insisted that all personal interests must be sacrificed to the one great purpose of the realization of the divine Idea. This is quite in keeping with the doctrine of the *Sittenlehre* of 1798, which demands as strenuously as the Kantian ethics, that all individual desires shall be subordinated to the moral law. But in the passage in the *Grundzüge* to which we have referred, Fichte explains his meaning thus. If the critic maintain that "our unconditioned condemnation of all individuality cannot be reconciled" with the thought that individuality is something "beautiful and lovable," he "has simply failed to notice that by individuality we mean merely the personal, sensuous existence of the individual. In no sense do we deny, on the contrary we expressly affirm and emphasize, the thought that the one eternal Idea, in every individual in whom it breaks forth into life, reveals itself in a wholly new form, which never has been before. And it does this quite independently of the sensuous nature, through itself, by its own decree. It is, then, by no means determined by the sensuous individuality. On the contrary, it negates this sensuous individuality, and solely of itself determines the ideal individuality, or more correctly, originality."¹

What now is the meaning of the distinction that Fichte makes in this passage? If I understand him, it is this. The divine Idea, as self-realizing principle, manifests itself to some degree, attains to partial actualization, in every individual life; but it is more fully realized in some lives than in others. From time to time there appear, among the children of men, lives which are so wholly given up to the divine Idea — so completely under the

¹ S. W., VII, 69. With this may be compared another passage in the same work (p. 110), in which Fichte tells us that in order to be perfect, a work of art must have a "clarity . . . and transparency untroubled by individuality or anything else that is not pure art. . . . The individuality of the artist, by means of which we can understand his work more intimately," is "as such, never a sensuous, but an ideal" individuality. That Fichte makes this distinction between the sensuous and the non-sensuous individuality, has been pointed out by Lask (*Fichtes Idealismus und die Geschichte*, Tübingen und Leipzig, 1902, 203 ff.) and by Maria Raich (*Fichte, seine Ethik und seine Stellung zum Problem des Individualismus*, Tübingen, 1905, 152 ff.). In my interpretation of the relation between the two kinds of individuality and of the meaning of Fichte's assertion that the lower individuality must be suppressed, I think that I have added something to the discussions found in these two works.

sway of their ideals — that they are in a peculiar sense the vehicle of its manifestation. In all ages, says Fichte, men have lived and died for the sake of ideas ; and through such living and dying has come into being “all that is great and good in our present-day civilization.”¹ Now when a human life surrenders itself thus to the Idea, when it becomes merely the mouthpiece through which the universal reason may speak, then we have always a man of strongly marked characteristics, a unique personality. The divine life, in its infinite fulness, has no need to repeat itself in any of its manifestations. Rather does it pour itself out, through each person who has devoted himself to it, in a distinctive form, which never has been before, which never will be again. Thus the self-manifestation of absolute reason in a human life does not involve the suppression of individual difference. On the contrary, it is precisely the man whose life most perfectly embodies the Idea, who has the richest, most distinctive personality. But if it be true that the indwelling of the Idea *creates* individuality, what is the sort of individuality whose doing away is the condition of all progress ? It is individuality in the sense of absorption in one's petty personal interests. An individuality which finds its reason for being in personal enjoyment, in the gratification of its own desires, this is the ‘sensuous’ kind, whose suppression is absolutely necessary to progress. Upon this point Fichte is uncompromising : the utter subordination of personal ease and enjoyment to ideal considerations, the surrender of the whole self to the guidance of the Idea — this ‘annihilation,’ as he calls it, of the lower individuality is the indispensable condition of the attainment of the higher.² Herein consists the paradox of personality : ‘He that loseth his individuality shall find it.’

¹ *Die Grundsätze des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, S. W., VII, 41.

² Cf. the following passages : “The Idea . . . pours itself out into the personal life of him [who has surrendered himself to it], destroying all his sensuous impulses and desires ; and the man is artist, hero, scientist, or saint” (*Die Grundsätze des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, S. W., VII, 119). “The love for the Idea dwells in him and constitutes his personality. . . . The eternal divine Idea here comes into existence in particular human individuals. This existence of the divine Idea in them encompasses itself with inexpressible love. Then we say, speaking according to the appearance, ‘This man loves the Idea and lives in the Idea,’ whereas in truth it is the Idea itself which lives and loves itself, in his stead and in his person, and his person in no sense exists or lives in and for itself, but is merely the appearance, in app-

It is important to distinguish at this point between what Fichte means by the surrender of the self to the absolute reason and what is ordinarily called altruism. To the best of my knowledge, Fichte nowhere makes this distinction very clear, and much of what he says about the suppression of individuality may seem to involve the denial of such a distinction. Nevertheless, I think we shall see that his doctrine of the two kinds of individuality really requires us to say that the self-surrender to the Idea and the conscious devotion of one's life to the service of the race are not perfectly synonymous phrases.

It is true, as we have just admitted, that Fichte sometimes speaks as if there were no difference between these two conceptions. *E. g.*, he describes the Idea as "the living and active thought . . . which is never directed toward the single person, but always includes the race."¹ Again, he says, "Reason aims at the one life, which appears as the life of the race. If from the human life we take away reason, there remains only individuality and the love of individuality. The rational life, then, consists in this, that the person forget himself in the race, identify his life with that of the whole, and sacrifice his life to the whole. The irrational life, on the other hand, consists in this, that the person think of nothing but himself, love nothing but himself, . . . identify his whole life merely with his own personal well-being. form, of this existence of the Idea. . . . In the true scholar the Idea has won a sensuous life which has completely annihilated and absorbed his personal life. He does not love the Idea more than all else — he loves nothing but it. . . . It alone is the source of all his joys and pleasures, it alone is the moving principle of all his thoughts, endeavors, and actions" (*Das Wesen des Gelehrten*, 1805, S. W., VI, 356). When the Idea "attains to life" in a human being, "it works irresistibly through its own inner life, not through the individual's. . . . Every one whom it has really seized upon, it drives forward against the will and desire of the personal, sensuous nature in him, using him as a passive instrument. . . . Wholly of itself and without needing assistance from the intention of the person himself, it ceaselessly acts and develops itself till it has won the living and influential form which it can win in this case" (*Op. cit.*, S. W., VI, 377).

That a work of genius often seems to its creator the product of a power which is not his own, is vouched for by the testimony of many. *Cf., e. g.*, George Eliot's statement to her husband. "She told me," he says, "that, in all that she considered her best writing, there was a 'not-herself,' which took possession of her, and that she felt her own personality to be merely the instrument through which this spirit, as it were, was acting" (*George Eliot's Life*, edited by J. W. Cross, Chap. XIX).

¹ *Die Grundsätze des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, S. W., VII, 119.

. . . There is only one virtue — to forget yourself as person — and only one vice — to think of yourself.”¹

But though Fichte seems, in these and other passages, to identify the true life with altruistic conduct, this is not his whole meaning. The true life consists in the surrendering of personal interests for the sake of that which we recognize as a ‘Higher than Happiness,’ whatever guise this ‘Higher’ may wear. The poet whose love for his art leads him “to scorn delights and live laborious days,” may have no definite purpose of serving his fellow-men; probably, so far as his intent goes, he does not live for mankind — just as he does not live for himself — but solely for his art. And yet, if he but serve his art with purity of purpose, we see in him precisely that devotion of the personal life to an ideal which Fichte lauds so highly. It is not essential that one should think of others; the essential is that one should forget self. And there is no question that the devotion of one’s life to the service of some great ideal often involves a certain detachment from the life of the community. To work *consciously* for the sake of humanity may often be to defeat the highest aims of art and science.

And yet we cannot suppose that there is any real contradiction between the service of the ideal and the service of one’s fellow-men. Surely it is by our fidelity to our ideals that we most certainly further the progress of the race. What Fichte would say, I think, is that whenever a life has surrendered itself to the guidance of the Idea, it does inevitably contribute to the progress of the race, whether there be any definite purpose to do so or not. That the conscious devotion of the individual may be to æsthetic or intellectual ideals rather than to the service of humanity, is occasionally suggested by Fichte himself. “The life of the race is expressed in the Ideas. . . . The formula which we used above, ‘to identify one’s life with the race,’ may also be expressed, ‘to identify one’s life with the Ideas.’ For the Ideas are directed to the race as such and to its life; and thus the rational — and hence right, good, and true life — consists in this, that one forget oneself in the Ideas, that one desire and know no

¹ *Op. cit.*, S. W., VII, 34 f. Cf. 36 f.

other joy than that which comes from them and from sacrificing all the other joy in life for their sake." ¹ And again: "They identified . . . their personal life and their joy with the Idea, and through this Idea with the race." ²

It may be remarked also that, according to the doctrine of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, the human race is not, strictly speaking, an end in itself, but a means to the realization of the end. The end is the actualization of the Idea of the Ego, or, in other words, the realizing of absolute values. The human race and human history are the means to the attainment of this end. Hence, strictly speaking, the devotion of oneself to the Idea, the constant effort to realize the supreme values through the medium of one's personal life, is the fundamental attitude, and devotion to the service of humanity a subordinate form of it.

It seems to me, then, that we are not justified in saying that by the higher individuality Fichte means the conscious surrender of all personal interests for the sake of humanity, but that we must rather say that he means the domination of the individual life by some great idea. That this conception does not adequately describe the individuality of all the great ones of the earth, must be admitted. There are many instances of genius — that of Goethe is one of the most striking — in which self-feeling seems to have been developed to a remarkable degree, and which could not without some forcing be described as the domination of the personality by the Idea. But at any rate there can be no question that our interpretation of Fichte's conception corresponds much more nearly to what we mean by genius than the interpretation which identifies the higher individuality with the conscious service of the race.

These suggestions as to the nature of individuality, which we have found in the works of the second period, may help us to understand in part what Fichte may have meant in the first period by the annihilation of individuality. Probably the chief thing that he meant, was that overcoming of the petty personal point of view which is at once the condition and the result of high endeavor.

¹ *Die Grundsätze des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, S. W., VII, 37.

² *Op. cit.*, S. W., VII, 45 f.

The forgetting of one's private interests in the pursuit of a great ideal is precisely what he calls, in one of the passages already quoted from the *Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, the "annihilation of the sensuous individuality."¹

But can we suppose that this is all that he means? Does not his doctrine that individuality and consciousness imply opposition, require us to say that the infinitely distant goal is not merely the complete subordination of self-regarding impulses, but the disappearance of consciousness itself? In a sense we must certainly say this; but, as has been already urged, we are not bound to suppose that the disappearance of consciousness, in Fichte's sense of 'consciousness,' involves its disappearance in every sense. It is probable that for Fichte the goal means what most of us would call a higher form of consciousness — an experience in which all sense of opposition and foreignness has vanished, in which self-feeling — the feeling of self as a unit, an isolated individual — has disappeared. While we cannot say with any definiteness what this higher form may be, yet certain states which we do experience give us a clue to its nature. In æsthetic rapture, in religious ecstasy, in the highest forms of intellectual activity, there is often a submergence of the distinct consciousness of self, a blurring of the line of division between subject and object, which gives us a suggestion of what Fichte may mean by the disappearance of consciousness as the goal of all our striving. Certainly we must admit that in such experiences the oppositions of life are overcome to a much greater degree than ordinarily; and certainly also we must admit that these moments represent the height of our attainment and may therefore be taken as furnishing faint glimpses of the infinitely distant goal, toward which the world-process is tending.

We have now finished our study of Fichte's conception of the ultimate principle as it is found in the earlier works. One or two questions which might naturally enough have been treated here, will be considered instead, as a matter of convenience, in the following chapter. The discussion in Chapter III, it may be

¹ "Die sinnliche Individualität vernichtend." (S. W., VII, 69.)

hoped, will throw additional light upon Fichte's conception of the ultimate principle as the Idea which is gradually realizing itself in the world, and upon the problem of the relation between this Idea and the process of its self-realization.

CHAPTER III.

THE WORKS OF THE SECOND PERIOD: BEING AND EXISTENCE.

In the preceding chapter we discussed in some detail the conception of the ultimate principle as it is found in Fichte's earlier writings. Our present task is to compare this conception with that which appears in the later works. The question of the relation between the two forms of Fichte's philosophy is one which has often been discussed and upon which widely different opinions have been held. Some have maintained that in the later writings we find a complete abandonment of the fundamental doctrines of the earlier, while others declare that there is no essential difference between the two periods. When there is so great disagreement in a matter of interpretation, one often finds that the truth lies somewhere between the extreme views; and with regard to the relation between the two phases of Fichte's philosophy, this seems to be the case. That there is a difference between the prevailing doctrines of the two periods must, I think, be admitted; but that the difference is not so far-reaching as many have supposed, is equally evident.

One of the works which are most commonly supposed to show the change in Fichte's system is the *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre aus dem Jahre 1801*.¹ In this treatise the term 'Ego,' which appears so frequently in the *Grundlage*, is usually replaced by the word 'knowing' or 'absolute knowing.' Fichte describes this knowing as a perfect union of being and freedom. First, it is absolutely *what* it is; in this aspect it is fixed, changeless, complete within itself—absolute being. Again, it is absolutely *because* it is; it exists simply through itself, without the aid of anything external; this is its aspect of absolute freedom.² Neither of these aspects, taken by itself, can give us absolute knowing:

¹ This work, though written in 1801, was not published until 1845, when it appeared in Vol. II of the *Sämmtliche Werke*.

² S. W., II, 24, 27, 38.

for it "is not resting being, nor on the other hand is it freedom ; . . . but it is the mutual interpenetration and fusion of both."¹ Moreover, the unity is an organic one. We should not regard the two elements as standing "in a relation of mere contiguity," as constituting "a formal and negative unity, a *Nichtverschiedenheit*." On the contrary, they must fuse so perfectly as to be indistinguishable. "It is precisely in this absolute fusion that the essence of knowing as such, or the absolute knowing, consists. . . . In this inseparable union, this perfect interpenetration, both elements lose their distinctive character and stand before us as one essence and an entirely new essence."²

This description of absolute knowing as an indissoluble union of being and freedom seems to correspond to the earlier doctrine of the Ego as the unity of the subjective and objective aspects of consciousness. 'Being' corresponds to the 'given,' the content of knowing ; 'freedom' to the uniting activity, the form of knowing. "If we look at absolute knowing with reference to its inner immanent . . . essence, we see it as absolute being ; if with reference to its inner immanent production, we see it as absolute freedom." But knowing itself is neither the one nor the other. If we take it as either one alone, we are looking at it abstractly. "In knowing . . . the duality is fused into unity" ;³ content and form are one.

In like manner, the relation between absolute and particular knowing seems to be the same as that which we found, in the earlier works, between the individual consciousness and its ultimate principle. Particular knowing is the realization of absolute knowing. As absolute, knowing is never actual ; it has actuality only in so far as it is a "knowing of something," *i. e.*, in so far as it involves a distinction between subject and object. Consciousness is an inadequate realization of that perfect unity of subject and object—or, to use the terminology of the *Darstellung*, of freedom and being—which is never completely actual.

The following passages will justify the description which we have given of the train of thought of the *Darstellung* :

"Our actual and possible knowing is in all cases, not an abso-

¹ S. W., II, 19.

² S. W., II, 17.

³ S. W., II, 24.

lute, but only a relative knowing, determined and limited in one way or another. . . . Absolute knowing comes or can come to consciousness only as form, or, in another way of looking at it, only as a matter or object, of actual knowing."¹

"All our actual knowing is a knowing of something — of *this* something, which is not that second or third something." But "it could not be a knowing of something unless it were a knowing in general, merely and absolutely as knowing. In so far as it is a knowing of something [*i. e.*, *this* knowing of *this* something], it differs from itself [as manifested] in every other knowing of every other something; but in so far as it is knowing, it is like itself and absolutely the same in all knowing of something, although this knowing of something may go on to infinity and in so far may vary through all infinity. Whenever we speak of absolute knowing, the reader is called upon to think of knowing as the one which is self-identical in all particular knowing, and through which the latter is not *this* knowing, but just *knowing*."²

So far the *Darstellung* of 1801 seems to be in harmony with the prevailing view of the first period. Knowing is, absolutely in and for itself; it is absolutely what it is and absolutely because it is. Apparently, then, it is self-sufficient and self-explanatory. If we should strike out a few passages here and there in the *Darstellung*, we should have a consistent exposition of the theory that the absolute principle is the ideal unity which is immanent in the individual consciousness.³ There are, however, a few statements which put the matter in a different light and which seem to show a tendency to think of the first principle more abstractly. For although knowing is absolute, still, Fichte tells us, it is not the Absolute. "It is clear from the mere concept of absolute knowing that it is not the *Absolute*. Every word that is added to the expression 'the Absolute,' destroys the absoluteness. . . . The Absolute is neither knowing nor being, nor is it either identity or indifference of these two; it is simply the Absolute."⁴

¹ S. W., II, 13.

² S. W., II, 14.

³ To be sure, Fichte does not emphasize here so strongly as in the *Grundlage* the thought of the ideal character of the Ego; still his statement that absolute knowing is never completely actualized, seems to suggest the same interpretation which we gave for the earlier work.

⁴ S. W., II, 12 f.

These words certainly suggest a doctrine somewhat different from that of the earlier writings. In the first period, Fichte takes, as his supreme principle, the unity which is immanent in consciousness. In the quotation before us, however, he seems to posit a transcendent principle: absolute knowing, which is implicit in every act of thought, and which corresponds to the Ego of the *Grundlage*, is declared not to be the Absolute. The ultimate principle, it seems, lies back of and beyond absolute knowing. This apparent disposition to substitute a transcendent for an immanent principle is not confined to the *Darstellung*; there are traces of it in nearly all the writings of the second period. The terminology varies in different works,¹ but everywhere there seems to be a tendency to postulate an Absolute behind the absolute Ego. The following passages will serve as examples:

The origin of absolute knowing is to be sought in "something which is not knowing at all," and which "we may perhaps call *being*."²

"Nothing exists outside God . . . except *knowing*; and this knowing is the divine existence itself. . . . God not only is (*ist*), inwardly and concealed within himself, but he also exists (*ist da*) and expresses himself."³

"What is outside God dissolves into mere perception (*Anschauung*), image (*Bild*), knowing . . . and in it there is not the slightest trace or gleam of true formal being, which remains wholly in God."⁴

"Only one is entirely through himself—God. . . . Through his being is all possible being given. Neither within him nor without him can a new being arise. If then, in spite of this, knowing is to be and yet is not to be God himself, it can only be . . . God himself, but outside himself, God's being outside his being, his expression. . . . Such an expression is an image or *schema*."⁵

¹ The ultimate principle is usually designated as 'God,' 'Being,' or 'the Absolute'; 'knowing,' 'absolute knowing,' 'the concept,' 'the divine Idea,' are terms that are apparently equivalent to the Ego of the earlier works.

² *Die Wissenschaftslehre* (1813), N. W., II, 3.

³ *Die Anweisung zum seligen Leben* (1806), S. W., V, 448 f.

⁴ *Die Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* (1810), S. W., II, 686.

⁵ *Die Wissenschaftslehre in ihrem allgemeinen Umrisse* (1810), S. W., II, 696.

"The concept is the ground of the world. . . . All being which the *Sittenlehre* can know, is the being that is grounded in the concept." Now the *Wissenschaftslehre* shows that this concept, which seems absolute and which "the *Sittenlehre* must . . . take as absolute," is really the "copy of a higher being," that it is "the *image of God*."¹

"The Absolute can have only an absolute . . . *manifestation*, and this is the *absolute knowing*. The Absolute *itself*, however, is not a being nor is it a knowing; nor is it identity or indifference of the two; but it is merely — the Absolute; and every added word is evil."²

One of the most striking passages of all appears in the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1804. Fichte complains here that all his critics have misunderstood the nature of his first principle. "The *Wissenschaftslehre*," he says, "has been interpreted as a purely idealistic system, which takes . . . the absolute Ego for the *Absolute* and tries to deduce everything else from it. No writer who is known to me, friend or foe, has risen to a higher conception" of the system.³

It is the existence of passages like these that has led some students of Fichte to regard his later works as representing a radical change of doctrine. Some have even gone so far as to declare that in the second period he thinks of the ultimate principle, not as activity, but as fixed, resting being. The incorrectness of this latter interpretation, it seems to me, has been conclusively shown by Loewe.⁴ The term 'being,' he maintains, is used in the various expositions of the *Wissenschaftslehre* in two different senses.⁵ When Fichte says, in the earlier works, that mere being can never serve as an ultimate principle of explanation, he has in mind *being* as opposed to *activity* — mere lifeless being, the thing-in-itself. But in the later works, where he often

¹ *Das System der Sittenlehre* (1812), N. W., III, 3 f.

² Letter to Schelling (1802), *Fichte's Leben und literarischer Briefwechsel*, 2te Aufl., II, 367.

³ N. W., II, 193.

⁴ *Die Philosophie Fichtes nach dem Gesamtergebnisse ihrer Entwicklung* (Stuttgart, 1862), 29 ff., 50 ff.

⁵ Loewe really recognizes three uses of the word (*Op. cit.*, 72). But for our purposes it is not necessary to consider more than two.

applies the word 'being' to his fundamental principle, he takes pains to tell us that this being is at the same time life and activity.

Loewe supports his interpretation by many citations from the writings of both periods. He has done his work so thoroughly that we need not stop to go over the ground again. We may simply pause to notice a few of the passages from the later writings which show that the 'being' which is identified with the Absolute is not the 'being' against which Fichte inveighs in the earlier works. In a letter to Schelling, written in 1801, Fichte says, "If we wish to give the name *being* to that which even the insight that we have now gained, cannot penetrate, . . . then God is pure being. But this being, in itself, is not, so to speak, compression; it is, throughout, agility, transparency, light. . . . It is *being*, only for the finite reason, but not in itself."¹ Again, in the *Wissenschaftslehre in ihrem allgemeinen Umrisse* (1810), we read, "God is not the dead concept, . . . but he is in himself pure life."² In the *Bericht über den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre* (1806), we are told: "The Absolute is only in immediate life, and except immediate life there is no other being."³ And in *Das Wesen des Gelehrten* (1805), are the words, "Being, absolutely as being, is living and active of itself, and there is no other being than life. In no sense is it dead, stationary, resting within itself. . . . The only life is the life of God or of the Absolute."⁴

In the face of these emphatic statements and others which Loewe cites, we certainly cannot say that the fundamental principle is conceived in the later works as *being* rather than *activity*. But although this may be granted, yet the passages which we have quoted from the *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre* and other works, seem, if taken by themselves, to show that Fichte now thinks of his principle as something higher than absolute knowing. And if this is really the case, if he now tries to explain consciousness, not by a unity implicit within it, but by an external principle, then we must grant that the change of doctrine, though not so great as some have believed, is still considerable.

Some writers indeed there are, who maintain that there is no

¹ *Leben und Briefwechsel*, 2te Aufl., II, 345.

² S. W., II, 696.

³ S. W., VIII, 370.

⁴ S. W., VI, 361.

difference of any consequence between the two periods. Fortlage, *e. g.*, says that the only change which Fichte makes in the later writings is one of terminology, and that he was led to it by the charge of atheism.¹ In the article which provoked the attack upon his orthodoxy, Fichte identifies God with the moral world-order. This position, says Fortlage, was liable to misapprehension: in the popular mind, the world-order is regarded as subordinate to the world-substance, of which it is supposed to be an attribute. When Fichte became aware that his statements had been misunderstood, he changed his terminology and spoke of God as the absolute *being*, whose *existence* is absolute knowing. But the alteration was merely in mode of statement; his conception of God remained the same throughout his system.

With Fortlage's main contention, that there is *no* change except in terminology, I cannot quite agree. Nor does it seem to me that the change of phraseology is to be explained wholly, or even mainly, by the charge of atheism. It is not unlikely — and this, I think, is the element of truth in Fortlage's interpretation — that the theological controversy in which Fichte became involved, opened his eyes to the fact that he had been greatly misunderstood and led him to alter some of his modes of expression. But in so far as the change in terminology does not represent an alteration of some sort in his thought, its chief cause is rather to be found in the charge of subjective idealism and solipsism. The almost complete abandonment of the word 'Ego,' even in the more technical writings of the second period, seems to me the most important change in *mere* terminology,² and this it is more natural to connect with the charge of solipsism than with that of atheism.

My most serious disagreement with Fortlage, however, is that I believe the difference between the two periods to be more than a difference in mode of expression. It seems to me that there is at least a noticeable shifting of emphasis. Thoughts which in the earlier writings are quite in the background, become promi-

¹ *Genetische Geschichte der Philosophie seit Kant* (Leipzig, 1852), 136 ff.

² The other important changes — the references to the Absolute and the designating of God as *being* — are not mere changes in terminology, as we shall try to show presently.

nent in the later ones ; and doctrines which are implicitly present in the first period, arise into clearer consciousness in the second. The difference between the earlier and later forms of Fichte's philosophy, as we shall try to show, is by no means so great as at first glance it seems to be ; but it is a real difference. What its nature is, we shall now try to learn.

In the passage from the *Darstellung* and the similar ones which we have quoted from other works, the Absolute and absolute knowing seem to be regarded as two distinct principles. I hope to be able to show, however, that Fichte does not really think of them in this way. And if we believe that he conceives them rather as two aspects of one principle, the most obvious way of describing the difference between the two periods, is to say that in the first he seems disposed to emphasize the temporal aspect of the ultimate principle, whereas in the second he dwells upon its timeless aspect. Apparently he came to feel that the earlier expositions of his philosophy were inadequate because they gave undue prominence to the conception of the principle as realizing itself in time. In the later writings, therefore, he took pains to point out that it has a timeless aspect as well.¹ Unfortunately the words in which he seeks to express this thought are not always well chosen. What he means to show, is that to describe the fundamental principle merely as an Idea which can never be fully realized, is at best to describe it inadequately, to call attention to one side of its nature and to ignore another, equally important, side. But in his effort to do this, he often seems to separate the two aspects by a sharp line of division, to make of them two distinct principles, one of which is primary and the other secondary. Absolute knowing, or the manifestation of the Absolute, which represents the temporal aspect, is often sharply distinguished from the Absolute itself, the timeless aspect.

The result of this unfortunate mode of expression is that Fichte

¹ It should be noted, however, that his interest in the philosophy of history is confined almost wholly to the second period ; and in this respect the later works may be said to pay much attention to the conception of the realization of the ultimate principle in the time-process.

has often been misunderstood. Many have believed that in the first period his ultimate principle is immanent in consciousness, while in the second he goes beyond the Ego of the earlier works and postulates a transcendent principle as its ground. In partial opposition to this interpretation, we shall try to show that he does not mean to describe absolute knowing and the Absolute as two distinct principles, but rather as two aspects of one. At the same time the fact that he tends, in the second period, to emphasize the timeless aspect much more strongly than in the first, may justify us in dissenting somewhat from the opinion of those who maintain that there is no change of any consequence in the later doctrine. There is, to say the least, a marked shifting of emphasis.

In the writings of the first period, as we have seen, stress is laid upon the thought that the Idea of the Ego is not, and never can be, fully realized, that it is the goal of an unending progress. What *actually is*, then, what *exists*, is the world of finite consciousnesses. But now, in this world, shot through and through, as it is, by the opposition of subject and object, we none the less see a partial realization of the ideal unity. Our world is a world in which values are realized — intellectual, moral, æsthetic values. How is this? Why is it that eternal values are actualized in this world of time, that the infinite process is also an infinite progress? The answer is found in Fichte's conception of the nature of the Idea. The Idea of the Ego, as he conceives it, is not simply *our* ideal, a psychological fact; in this case the only values that were realized, would be subjective ones. Again, it is not merely an objective norm, with which we may compare reality in order to determine its worth; on this supposition the *presence* of value in the world of reality would still be unexplained. Once more, it is not something fixed and stationary outside the world-process, which guides that process by the force of attraction; strictly speaking, this conception has no meaning when one frees it from spatial implications. The Idea of the Ego is none of these three. Fichte's conception is rather that the supreme value is itself a moving power, a principle of activity. The reason why values are realized in this world of ours, is that the Idea of the

Ego, the absolute value, *realizes itself*, and the form that its self-realization takes, is the world-process. God is at once the supreme value and the indwelling principle of the world-process. He is the moral world-order, which is, however, an *ordo ordinans*; ¹ not, strictly speaking, a world-order that is *built up by us*, but one that *builds itself* in and through us.

But if this is true, then we cannot rest satisfied with the statement that all that *is*, is this world-process, in which values are progressively realized. If the Idea were merely a norm by which we measured the progress, then we could say that nothing is except the process itself. But if the Idea is the indwelling force, by virtue of which alone there *is* a process, if it is, as Fichte maintains, the world-ground, then there is a sense in which we may say that it is, and that because it is, the world is.

In this sense, then, we may speak of the *Sein* of the Idea — *i. e.*, of the absolute value as itself a mode of reality — and of its *Dasein* — *i. e.*, of its progressive actualization in time. Now if we consider the Idea simply as absolute value, leaving out of account the thought of its actualization, we are dealing with it as a non-temporal reality; it is of the essence of value that it is timeless in its nature. Hence the *Sollen*, which is the ground of all existence, the motive power in all process and change, is, when considered in itself, changeless and eternal.

It must have been somewhat in this way that Fichte was led to make the distinction, which appears so prominently in some of his later writings, between the self-manifestation of the Absolute and its own inner life — between what he often calls its *Fürsich* and its *Ansich*. The one is the ultimate principle considered as in time, the absolute life, unfolding itself in ever new and higher forms. The other is the same principle considered in its own inner nature, without reference to the fact of its self-manifestation and therefore without reference to time; hence Fichte speaks of it as a timeless reality and tells us, in words which at first glance seem far removed from the spirit of the earlier *Wissenschaftslehre*, that

¹ "The moral world-order, or — if one cannot accustom oneself to the word in the sense of *ordo ordinans*, *absolute*, *eoque ipso creans* — moral principle, creative moral force — whatever we are to call it, at any rate God is, exists (*existiert*), in himself only as such order" (Zu "*Jacobi an Fichte*," 1799, N. W., III, 392).

in it is no change or movement, that it never becomes, but simply is.

The transition from the first to the second way of looking at the principle is most clearly shown in a discussion found in the *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* (1810). In this work, Fichte begins with an examination of the lowest stages of consciousness and gradually develops the doctrine of the Idea or the final purpose, as the ground of the world's existence. "Life exists," he concludes, "not for its own sake," but in order that the end may be realized. Hence it does not "exist *through* itself; that is, the ground of its existence is not in itself, but in another, in the final purpose." Now we cannot say that the end "*is* as a fact (*faktisch ist*) in the sphere of phenomena," but only that "*it shall* be and become in this sphere through life itself. If the final purpose is, it is only through life [that is, it has actuality only in so far as it is realized in the world-process]; and, on the other hand, life itself, in its own existence, is only through the being of the final purpose [that is, the ground of the process is a *Sollen*, a demand that what is not, shall be]. . . . Thus the being of life is not something absolute: its ground has been discovered; it is created and determined by the final purpose."¹

So far we have the doctrine with which we are familiar in Fichte's earlier works. But the argument now takes a new turn. In the world of phenomena, as we have just seen, the ideal *is* not; it simply *becomes*. In itself, however, in abstraction from this world, it does not *become*; it simply *is*. "The absolute final purpose is, and it is altogether complete (*ganz und durchaus fertig*) and self-determined; it is what it is, wholly through itself.² . . . It is; it does not become, and nothing becomes in it."³ We see that this must be so, as soon as we consider carefully the concept of becoming; for an absolute becoming, in which there

¹ S. W., II, 658 f.

² But although the end is, wholly through itself, there is still a necessary connection between it and the world. "In the very concept of a final purpose is contained the necessity" that it fulfil itself. "It *will* be realized" [the italics are mine], and it finds its realization in life. The perfect realization, of course, is never attained. "The absolute final purpose never becomes [completely] visible"; but each new world is a fuller manifestation of it (pp. 659, 678 f.).

³ S. W., II, 659.

is no element of fixity, is manifestly unthinkable. Mere becoming would "vanish into nothingness." "In all this infinite becoming there is a being, which *is* and does not become, which is not altered, which has no part in change."¹

The result of our discussion, then, is this: "The being of life, which must be assumed as its ground, becomes final purpose merely in the synthesis with the becoming as the form of life. Outside this synthesis, beyond this form, we must not speak of a final purpose, but only of a being pure and simple. The final purpose is thus the *expression* of being in becoming, in order that being may be made visible."²

In this discussion we get some clue as to the motive of the change which we find in Fichte's later writings. The feeling which seems to be uppermost here is this: that the conception of a *mere* temporal process is meaningless, that all change implies the unchanging, every temporal a non-temporal; and therefore that if it be, from one point of view, admissible to conceive of the ultimate principle, not as that which *is*, but as that which *ought to be*, and thus to identify what *is* with the world of consciousness, in which the *Ought-to-be* never fully *is*, still this is not the only possible point of view; that, on the contrary, the principle has its own being, which is not dependent upon or grounded in its realization, but which is rather to be conceived as the ground of this realization.

Now, as we have said, Fichte often speaks as if this inner being of the ultimate principle were something quite distinct from its self-realization in the world-process. This leads to the appearance of a great difference between the doctrine of the first period, where the principle is conceived almost exclusively in its aspect of self-actualizing Idea, and that of the second period. That the change in the later writings is, however, not so great as it might at first seem to be, we shall try to prove in two ways. We shall try to show, in the first place, that the tendency to distinguish between the Absolute and its manifestation, which is so noticeable in the second period, is present also, though in less degree and in a different form, in the works of the first; and in the sec-

¹ S. W., II, 681 f.

² S. W., II, 683.

ond place, that Fichte does not really make so sharp a distinction between the Absolute and its *Dasein* in the later writings as one might be disposed to think.

We turn at once to the task of establishing our first point. As we have seen, there is a marked disposition in the later writings to insist upon the timeless nature of the Absolute and to distinguish sharply between its changless inner being and the manifestation of this being in the temporal process. This tendency is a distinctive characteristic of the second period; but we shall see, I think, that it is not altogether without its parallel in the first. *E. g.*, with the passage in the *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre* which declares that we may not ascribe any predicates whatever to the Absolute,¹ we may compare the following from the *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*: "The absolute Ego of the first *Grundsatz* is not *something* (it has no predicates and can have none); it is absolutely *what* it is, and this cannot be further explained."² Again, there are passages in the earlier works in which Fichte even designates the ultimate principle as 'being.' *E. g.*, in a note in the *Grundlage*, in which he is contrasting his philosophy with Stoicism, he says, "In consistent Stoicism the infinite idea of the Ego is taken for the actual Ego; absolute being (*absolutes Sein*) and actual existence (*wirkliches Dasein*) are not distinguished. Hence the Stoic sage is self-sufficient and free from limitation. To him are attributed all the predicates that belong to the pure Ego or God. According to the Stoic ethics, we are not to become like God, but we ourselves are God. The *Wissenschaftslehre* carefully distinguishes absolute being and actual existence and simply takes the former as ground, in order to be able to explain the latter."³

This second passage seems to show that even in the *Grundlage* of 1794 Fichte thought it not unfitting to designate the Idea of the Ego as 'being.' The *existence* of the Idea, the actual world of consciousness, is process; in it the temporal aspect is prominent. But the Idea has a *Sein* as well as a *Dasein*, a timeless nature as well as a temporal realization. The thought is

¹ Quoted above, p. 71.

² S. W., I, 109.

³ S. W., I, 278, note; cf. 279.

not further developed here, and there are not many places in the earlier works in which Fichte describes the ultimate principle as 'being.' The latter fact may be explained in part by reference to Loewe's distinction between the two uses of the term 'being.'¹ In the earlier writings Fichte ordinarily identified 'being' with the thing-in-itself and thus would be loath to apply the word to his principle.

But though we may be justified in saying that the attribution of being to the ultimate principle is not wholly confined to the later writings, we are far from wishing to maintain that the difference between the two periods is one of mere terminology. On the contrary, it is evident that in the earlier works the emphasis is, throughout, upon the temporal aspect of the ultimate principle. What we wish to point out is simply that even in the first period Fichte could not have believed that this temporal aspect is the only one. The very fact that he follows Kant in regarding time as simply the form of human experience² and thus only a means to the manifestation of the Idea, seems to suggest that this cannot have been the case.

We seem justified, then, in maintaining that the doctrine of the second period, with its emphasis upon the timeless aspect, is not wholly unrelated to Fichte's earlier mode of thought. This can also be brought out in another way. In the preceding chapter we saw that there are traces, in the earlier works, of a disposition to insist upon the unlikeness between consciousness and its ultimate ground. The way in which Fichte sometimes emphasizes the opposition between the finite and infinite aspects of the Ego (in the *Grundlage* of 1794) or between the natural impulse and the impulse toward self-activity (in the *Sittenlehre* of 1798) has already been dwelt upon. Now it seems to me not unjustifiable to regard this as evidence of the same general tendency which we

¹ See above, pp. 73 f.

² Cf. the deduction of time in the *Grundriss des Eigenthümlichen der Wissenschaftslehre* (1795), S. W., I, 405 ff. Another deduction, belonging to the second period, is found in the *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre*, S. W., II, 100 ff. Both deductions are exceedingly difficult, and most of the expositions — e. g., those of Kuno Fischer and Loewe — simply repeat Fichte's involved statement without explanation. The only exposition that I know which gives the reader any assistance, is that of Léon (*La Philosophie de Fichte*, Paris, 1902, pp. 109 ff., 435 ff.).

find so prominent, though in another form, in the later writings. We have seen that this tendency is held in check, in the first period, by an even stronger disposition to insist upon the oneness of the two aspects of the Ego ; and we have maintained that if we take the first period as a whole, the trend of thought is obviously toward the more concrete view of the relation between the Idea and the world of actual existence. But the fact remains that even in the earlier works, Fichte seems sometimes to distinguish rather sharply between the world of consciousness and its ultimate ground. It seems, then, not unreasonable to suppose that his later insistence upon the non-temporal aspect of the Idea and his disposition to separate the *Ansich* from the *Fürsich* are simply a new form of a tendency that was present, though less markedly, in the earlier writings.

From this brief argument in support of our first point, we may now pass on to our second — which will require more detailed discussion — and may try to show that even in the later works the gulf which seems to have been set between the Absolute and its manifestation is not so wide as one might at first think.

We have already considered a number of passages from the later works, in which Fichte distinguishes between the *Sein* and the *Dasein* of the Absolute, between the outer life, of which the *Wissenschaftslehre* professes to give an exposition, and the hidden inner life, which it can indicate to us, but which it cannot describe. We are now to see that there are many passages in which another tendency appears, in which Fichte insists upon the unity of these two aspects of the one principle.

In the discussion in the *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*, which we have already examined with some care, there is one important statement that has not yet been quoted. As soon as he has reached the conception of God as the ultimate being, whose image is the being of life, Fichte, continues thus : “ From the mere concept [of God] we can say nothing more about him than that he is the Absolute and that he is not perception (*Anschauung*) or anything else that inheres in the perception by reason of its capacity for life (*Lebendigkeit*). This, however, is the mere form of God's being, and it is such form only as opposed to the

being of the appearance. What God actually is, of and in himself, appears in the perception. This expresses him completely, and he is in it as he is inwardly, in himself. This perception, however, is not in its turn perceived; it expresses itself only through the freedom that is joined with it. Thus God's being, as it is in God himself, reveals itself progressively to all infinity, first and immediately in the perception of the eternal final purpose. Life, therefore, in its proper being, is the image of God, just as he is within himself. But as formal life, as really living and active, it is the infinite striving really to become this image of God, which, however, it never can become, because the striving is infinite."¹

Similar statements are found in other works. In the *Anweisung zum seligen Leben* Fichte says: "The real life of knowing is then, in its root, the inner being and essence of the Absolute itself and nothing else. Between the Absolute or God, and knowing, in the deepest roots of its life, there is no separation, but the two completely coincide."² And again: We now see "that being and existence completely coincide. . . . For to his [God's] being of and through himself, belongs his existence, and this existence can have no other ground; conversely, to *his* existence belongs all that which he is inwardly and through his essence. The whole distinction between *Sein* and *Dasein*, which we made in the previous discussion, and the lack of connection between the two, now show themselves as only for us and as a consequence of our limitation, but in no sense as in themselves and as being immediately in the divine existence."³

The *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre*, as we have said, is one of the works that are most commonly supposed to represent the change which Fichte's doctrine undergoes in the second period; and we have already quoted from it a passage in which he distinguishes sharply between the Absolute and absolute knowing. Yet in this very treatise we find several instances in which he seems to be implicitly correcting the abstractness of his view. The correction is made in two ways. In the first place he sometimes speaks as if being and freedom — the two characteristics of absolute know-

¹ S. W., II, 684 f.² S. W., V, 443.³ S. W., V, 452.

ing — were predicates of the Absolute itself. "Let the reader think the *Absolute* merely as such. . . . He will find, we maintain, that he can think it only under two aspects: first, as being absolutely *what* it is, resting firmly upon and in itself, without any change or wavering, completely enclosed within itself; and secondly, as being what it is, absolutely *because* it is, of itself and through itself, without any foreign influence; for there can be nothing foreign left outside the Absolute, but all that is not the Absolute itself, disappears. . . . These two characteristics of the Absolute must completely fuse and coincide in knowing."¹ "The Absolute is neither" being nor freedom, "but it is both as absolutely one; and in knowing, at least, this duality is fused into unity."² "Knowing is not the *Absolute*, but only the fusion of the two predicates of the Absolute into a unity. Hence it must be absolute as for itself, but in this absoluteness it is only secondary, not primary."³ The Absolute "is perhaps nothing else than the union of the two primal qualities in the formal unity of thinking."⁴

These passages do not seem in all respects perfectly harmonious, but they agree, at least, in suggesting a vital connection between absolute knowing and the Absolute. The central thought seems to be that the Absolute *finds* its unity only in and through the world-process or knowing. If this is so, if absolute knowing is the unity of the Absolute, then it is possible to understand the connection between the two. The world of consciousness may now be regarded as the progressive *coming to unity* of the Absolute, as the progress from an undifferentiated, to a higher, unity by means of difference. The One in its *Dasein* is not a perfect unity: absolute knowing is never completely actual. But the perfect unity is the goal of the process, and all particular knowing is a partial realization of it.

If we interpret the passages before us in this way, we have much the same doctrine that is prominent in the first period. As a logical starting-point, we must assume an Absolute, an undifferentiated unity, the absolute Ego of the *Grundlage*. But the higher unity can be realized only through the positing and overcoming

¹ S. W., II, 16 f. ² S. W., II, 24. ³ S. W., II, 27. ⁴ S. W., II, 30.

of difference, *i. e.*, through the development of consciousness. If the differences were ever fully overcome, the ideal of perfect unity — absolute knowing, or, in the earlier terminology, the Idea of the Ego — would have been realized; the Absolute would have come to its unity in and through knowing.

There is another set of passages in the *Darstellung* which shows in a different way the effort that Fichte makes to exhibit the ultimate principle in its less abstract form. We have already quoted a passage¹ in which he tells us that we cannot attach any predicates to the Absolute without destroying the absoluteness. The natural inference from this is that we can have no knowledge whatever of the ultimate principle. In a later discussion, however, Fichte seems to say that there is a sense in which knowing may be said to give us the Absolute. The *Wissenschaftslehre* is the "knowing of knowing." In it, knowing makes itself its object, penetrates the mystery of its being. Hence in this philosophical reflection we must "go out beyond knowing and bring to light elements which indeed . . . are implicit *in* it, but which cannot be present *for* it." This is "the self-forgetting and self-annihilating of knowing."² The fundamental characteristic of knowing is its ability to discover its own origin. Knowing is egohood, "penetrability, absolute light"; it is essentially "Fürsichsein, Innerlichkeit des Ursprunges." By virtue of its power of self-penetration, it can go back upon itself until it reaches its absolute origin. But this process of return upon self is a process of self-forgetting and self-annihilating. Knowing "cannot contemplate its absolute origin without contemplating its boundary, its not-being."³ Its ground must be something other than knowing, must be not-knowing or being.

Now although this absolute being is gained by the negation of knowing, yet Fichte does not seem always to conceive the relation between the two as negative. "*Pure being*," he tells us in this same passage, "is pure knowing, thought as *origin* for itself and thought as its own opposite,"⁴ as the not-being of know-

¹ See above, p. 71.

² S. W., II, 42.

³ S. W., II, 63.

⁴ The text reads, "Das reine Wissen gedacht, als *Ursprung* für sich, und seinen Gegensatz als Nichtsein des Wissens, weil es sonst nicht entspringen könnte, ist *reines Sein*." In spite of the grammatical construction, it seems clear that we must take *Gegensatz* with *gedacht als*, rather than with *für*.

ing, because otherwise [*i. e.*, if it did not proceed from its not-being] it could not come to be. (Or we may say, if only the reader will understand it aright, that the standpoint of absolute knowing is absolute creation as a producing, not as something produced. Knowing produces itself from its pure possibility as that which alone is prior to it,¹ and this [possibility] is the pure being.) ”

This passage seems to indicate a doctrine which is essentially that of the *Grundlage*. The “pure possibility, . . . that which alone is prior” to knowing, may be held to correspond with the absolute Ego of the first period. And the context certainly leads one to infer that this possibility (pure being) is what Fichte has elsewhere called the Absolute. Here, then, the Absolute seems to be conceived as no more remote from the world of consciousness than is the absolute Ego of the *Grundlage*. But we find a still more striking resemblance to the earlier doctrine in a discussion which occurs shortly before the one that we have just been considering. “Besides the concept of the Absolute which we formed at the beginning, we have now, through our later investigations, gained a still clearer notion of the form of the Absolute; namely, that in relation to a possible knowing, it is a pure thinking, which is completely bound to itself, which never comes out from itself, to ask for a ‘why’ or to posit a ‘because’ of its formal or material being, even if there be an absolute ‘because’; a thinking in which, by reason of this absolute negation of the ‘because,’ the *for-itself* (or knowing) is not yet posited, and which thus is a mere pure being without any knowing, although in our science we must make this being visible (*dies Sein anschaulich machen*) by the help of the absolute pure form of thinking. Knowing, then, as *absolute* and as completely bound in its origin (*Ursprünglichkeit*), must be designated as the *one*, . . . self-similar, unchangeable, eternal, indestructible, *abso-*

¹ Here again an emendation of the text seems necessary. The original reads, “Dies [*sc.* Wissen] erschafft sich eben selbst aus seiner reinen Möglichkeit, als das einzig ihr vorausgegebene, und diese eben ist das reine Sein.” I have emended this to read, “als dem einzig ihm vorausgegebenen.” One might also say, though less well, “als das einzig ihm vorausgegebene”—the sense remaining the same. But the change from *ihr* to *ihm* is absolutely necessary.

lute being (or God, if one will only admit that this term contains some suggestion of knowing and of a relationship to knowing). . . . But now this Absolute is to be an absolute *knowing*. It must therefore be *for* itself, which, as we have shown, it can be only factually [*i. e.*, only by becoming actual], through the absolute realization of freedom. . . . It must go out from itself, must reproduce itself." But this production must not be "merely a knowing for and of itself, as the product of freedom, for this . . . would be a knowing quite detached from the Absolute ; it must rather be . . . a *Fürsich* of the Absolute in and by means of" the realization through freedom. This realization "cannot tear itself away" from the Absolute ; if it did, we should have, "not an absolute knowing, but only a free and contingent knowing, utterly without content and substance." We have, then, "a perfectly immediate, nay an absolute *connection*" between the Absolute and its realization. Hence, when we say that the realization "is a knowing, a *Fürsich*, we no longer mean simply that it is a something produced through freedom ; we mean also that it is a knowing which is united with the Absolute by means of that absolute connection — a knowing which expresses the Absolute."¹

The thought that Fichte is trying to develop here seems to be that the Absolute and its manifestation are really one. The 'being' of which we hear so much in the later writings, is not something other than knowing, something distinct from the Ego ; it is knowing conceived as source of itself, or, in other words, it is the Ego considered as fundamental principle. The general tenor of the passage seems to suggest that the Absolute of the *Darstellung* is the correlate of the absolute Ego which we find in the *Grundlage*, that particular knowing corresponds to the world of consciousness, and absolute knowing to the Idea of the Ego.

The *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1804 is one of the most important of Fichte's later writings and one which throws some light upon our present problem. In it, as in the *Darstellung*, the doctrine of the self-negation of knowing plays an important part. Instead of the term 'knowing,' however, Fichte now uses the word 'con-

¹ S. W., II, 60 ff.

cept' or 'insight' (*Einsicht*). The Absolute he usually speaks of as the 'living Light,' of which the world of thought is the manifestation. In one sense we cannot get beyond the manifestation of the Light; in another sense, as soon as we speak of it as a manifestation, we are already beyond it. The Light has a dual existence (*Existenz*); an outer, objective one, in and for our thought, and an inner one, "conditioned by the negation of the concept."¹ By negating our insight, we may get a description of this inner life: it is "that which we cannot in any way see into, which remains after the most complete and penetrating insight; it is *das für sich bestehen Sollende*."² This is the result gained by negating the insight. Thus we learn that "the insight can see into *itself*, the concept can conceive itself." In doing this, "the concept finds its boundary, . . . beyond which lies the one pure living Light."³

So far, the relation between knowing and the Absolute, or the concept and the Light, seems to be regarded as negative; but Fichte goes on to a fuller development of his thought. The discussion⁴ is long and complicated, and very difficult of interpretation; but the argument seems to be as follows. If we say that we reach the Absolute by the negation of the concept, two possible points of view at once suggest themselves. Either we may maintain that the *Ansich* which has thus been reached, is the Absolute (this is the realistic theory);⁵ or we may say that, since it is reached by the self-negation of the concept, the concept itself is the Absolute (this is the idealistic theory).⁶ Both these theories are one-sided. In each we have a factual, rather than a genetic, view;⁷ *i. e.*, we are dealing with our thinking of the *Ansich*, rather than with its *self-construction* in us.⁸ On the idealistic view, we make our thinking the fundamental principle. But what right have we to assume that simply because we are *conscious* of this thinking, therefore it is *our* thinking?⁹ The truth is rather that the living *Ansich* thinks in us. On the realistic view, on the other hand, we set up, as absolute, an *Ansich* that has been gained by the negation of its opposite. Now this

¹ N. W., II, 148. ² N. W., II, 150. ³ N. W., II, 152. ⁴ N. W., II, 161-212.

⁵ N. W., II, 174-176, 179, 201. ⁶ N. W., II, 171-173. ⁷ N. W., II, 181.

⁸ N. W., II, 191.

⁹ N. W., II, 189, 201.

could not be the ultimate principle. That which "is determined by the negation of an opposite" is a "member of a relation" and hence is no true *Ansich*, no Absolute.¹ We must remove from our concept all such negative determination, all relativity. When we have done this, "there remains the positing and persisting and resting of an *Ansich* taken as absolute, . . . a being which for its being needs no other being. . . . The whole relation and comparison with a *Nichtansich*, from which first the form of the *Ansich* arises, . . . is utterly meaningless and useless."² In this first form we objectified the pure being, as thought must always do, and thus we had its outer existence. Our task now is to penetrate to its inner essence; and we do this, "when we look at it as a genetic principle for its appearance in the outer existential form."³

We have thus reached a higher unity of realism and idealism in the thought of the Absolute as "pure being" in "abstraction from all relation." This being is wholly "*of itself, in itself, through itself*. . . . It is an *esse in mero actu*,"⁴ the perfect interpenetration of being and life. "There is no duality or plurality at all, but only unity; for . . . the essence of being consists in a self-enclosed unity." Now "if being is encompassed by its own absolute life and can never get outside its own life, it . . . can be nothing else than a self-enclosed Ego," the "*living Wir in sich*."⁵ We have here a new insight into the nature of our ultimate principle. Our previous insight objectified the Absolute — went out from itself to a being which it described as an inaccessible *Ansich*. From our present point of view, being is not objectified. In this new insight, "we ourselves become being." We cannot "go out to it, because we are it. . . . We cannot go out from ourselves because being cannot go out from itself."⁶

This discussion is perhaps the most important expression in the later works of Fichte's belief in the closeness of the relation between consciousness and its ultimate ground. Passages like this furnish the best answer that can be made to the objection raised by Harms, that Fichte's Absolute is conceived negatively.

¹ N. W., II, 202 f.² N. W., II, 203 f.³ N. W., II, 204.⁴ N. W., II, 205 f.⁵ N. W., II, 206 f.⁶ N. W., II, 208.

According to this critic, Fichte teaches that the fundamental principle is reached by the negation of knowing. But, says Harms, in thus maintaining that ultimate being is inconceivable and unknowable, Fichte is carrying over into the Absolute what is really only a defect of human thought. In reality, being "is not the negation of knowing, but the positing of the known object; it is not *sine notione*, but *præter notionem*." ¹

If we take Fichte's statements literally, it cannot be denied that there are some which seem, at first thought, to justify this criticism. The passages in which he tells us that we cannot apply any predicates to the Absolute and in which he says that it is discovered only by the self-negation of knowing are cases in point. But the discussion which we have now before us suggests a different interpretation. Here Fichte distinctly rejects the doctrine of a negative Absolute. It must be remembered also that after developing, in the earlier part of this work, the doctrine of the self-negation of knowing, he proceeds from this very point to work out a positive conception of the Absolute. Hence it seems that we are justified in regarding the first doctrine as provisional. In this connection we may also quote an interesting passage in this same work, in which Fichte explains what he means by calling his principle unknowable. "The *inconceivability*" of the Absolute, he says, "is merely the negation of the concept, the expression of its abrogation, hence a characteristic proceeding from knowing and the concept and carried over from them. . . . The Absolute is not in itself *inconceivable*; for this does not mean anything. It is inconceivable only when the concept tries to comprehend it." ² Thus, in speaking of the principle as unknowable, Fichte asserts, what most of us would readily grant, that all attempts to exhaust the Absolute by our concepts are foredoomed to failure. But this is not to say that we have no means whatever of apprehending the nature of the ultimate principle; on the contrary, Fichte believes that all our thinking and all our acting are a revelation of its inmost essence.

The results of our examination seem to show that in the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1804, as in the *Darstellung der Wissenschafts-*

¹ *Die Philosophie seit Kant* (Berlin, 1876), 332.

² N. W., II, 117 f.

lehre, there is a marked tendency to emphasize the oneness of the Absolute and its manifestation. And in general, we seem to have found considerable evidence in favor of the point which we have been trying to establish, namely, that in the second period the obvious tendency to dwell upon the difference between consciousness and its ultimate ground is to a considerable extent counterbalanced by a tendency in the opposite direction.

But before we can say that we have fully justified our interpretation, we must consider one more aspect of the question. If we take the conception of being which Fichte gives us in the second period, being as a self-dependent, all-embracing whole, if we say that the Absolute, in its inmost essence, is sufficient unto itself, has no need to be supplied, no lack to be made good, how are we to understand the relation between this self-enclosed Absolute and its manifestation as temporal process? Why, on Fichte's principles, need there be any world at all, any system of conscious beings, any history of the human race? Why should the timeless reality enter thus into the form of time? Why should it give up the changeless calm of its own inner life and transform itself¹ into this restless, turbulent world-process, this ceaseless striving for a goal that can never be reached? This is an important question for Fichte's philosophy, and it is clear that he himself recognized it as such.

To this question Fichte seems to make two very different answers. Sometimes he tells us that the Absolute manifests itself through a necessity of its own inner nature. At other times he speaks as if there were in it no ground for its manifestation. It does, *as a fact*, reveal itself, but its self-revelation seems to have no inner connection with its *Sein*. On the contrary, the *Dasein* is declared to rest upon an act of freedom, and the language used,

¹ It is hardly necessary to explain that the expressions 'give up' and 'transform' are not to be taken literally. The relation between *Sein* and *Dasein*, in Fichte's theory, is not, on any possible interpretation, a temporal one. The question, more exactly stated, is this: If the Absolute, in the aspect which we call *Sein*, is all-sufficient, why has it also the other aspect of *Dasein*? Our answer to this question — to anticipate the results of the discussion upon which we are about to enter — is that, in spite of his assertions to the contrary, Fichte does not really regard the *Sein* as all-sufficient, *i. e.*, that it is for him only one of the two complementary aspects of the ultimate principle.

often suggests that by 'freedom' is meant absolute freedom, liberty of indifference. The actual world, we are told, is a product of freedom and necessity. *If* there is to be a world, there must be in it a certain order and sequence — it must be governed by law. But *that* there should be a world, that the Absolute should manifest itself in the time-process, is by no means necessary; it is the result of a free activity. This seems to be the teaching of several passages in the *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre*. E. g., "We have considered . . . knowing as pure arising out of nothing. Thus we have regarded it positively as actual arising. . . . This is its form. But in the matter (*Materie*) of the arising there is involved the possibility that it was also able not to be. Hence the being of knowing, in distinction from the absolute being, is posited as contingent, as something that could just as well not-be, as an act of absolute freedom. . . . This now is *freedom* and indeed absolute freedom, indifference with regard to the absolute . . . knowing itself. . . . Negatively considered, it is nothing else than the thought of the *contingency* of absolute knowing. (Observe the apparent contradiction: knowing is the absolutely contingent or the contingent Absolute — the aspect of contingency . . . of the Absolute — just because it enters into [the sphere of] quantity and into the absolute basal form of quantity, into the infinite time-series). *Positively* considered, freedom is the thought of the absoluteness of knowing, the thought that it posits *itself* through self-realizing freedom." ¹ And again: "Knowing, with reference to its being (its existence, its being posited), is by no means necessary, but has its ground in absolute formal freedom. . . . *If* there is a knowing, then it is necessarily free (freedom bound); for its essence consists in freedom. But *that* there is a knowing at all, depends wholly on absolute freedom, and hence there could just as well be none." ²

The same view seems to be expressed in this passage from the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1812: "That there is a factual world, depends altogether on this, that the freedom of the appearance (*Erscheinung*) surrenders itself to the law. . . . It is clear that freedom is not *compelled* to surrender itself; for thus it would

¹ S. W., II, 157 f.

² S. W., II, 52.

not be freedom. . . . It is only after freedom has surrendered itself and thus has destroyed and negated itself as freedom, that this factual law steps in." ¹

These and other passages are quoted by Miss Thompson ² in support of her interpretation of Fichte. According to her view, his doctrine, both in the first and in the second period, is that the world of consciousness owes its existence to an act of absolute freedom. In her own words: "A free will which as freedom is the power and possibility of anything, of law or of not-law, of existence or of non-existence, wills to be, or, in other words, to appear as law. . . . Hereupon the phenomenal world, the totality of consciousness, becomes visible. . . . Hence the phenomenal world may be defined as Will-stuff freely becoming law: in substance it is Will, in form it is Necessity. Any other form might be assumed, for the substance is absolutely free with the unthinkable freedom of indifference, caprice. But it chooses to renounce this freedom and appear as the world of consciousness with its laws." ³

It must be admitted that there are passages which seem at first thought to justify this interpretation. Nevertheless I cannot believe that it represents Fichte's real position. He never meant to say, I think, that the relation between the *Sein* and *Dasein* of the Absolute is in any sense an arbitrary one. On the contrary, I should maintain that even where he distinguishes sharply between these two aspects — and that he often does this, I have not attempted to deny — he none the less believes in their necessary interrelation.

In the *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre* we are told, not only that absolute knowing is a union of being and freedom, but also that the Absolute itself is such a union. ⁴ Now if it be true that

¹ N. W., II, 430.

² Anna Boynton Thompson: *The Unity of Fichte's Doctrine of Knowledge*, Boston, 1895.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 17. It is hardly necessary to add that Miss Thompson does not mean this as the description of an actual event. As she explains, "The world of consciousness, in its complex wholeness, is all that there is." Freedom and law are its "two logical constituents" (*Op. cit.*, p. 18).

⁴ S. W., II, 24, quoted above, p. 85. 'Being,' in the *Darstellung*, seems to correspond to 'necessity.'

being—the element of necessity—is contained in the very nature of the Absolute, it is difficult to see how we can speak of the real world as grounded in an act of freedom,—in the sense of liberty of indifference,—how we can suggest that there might equally well have been an utterly different world from this one, or even no world at all. But there are many other statements of Fichte's which make still more strongly against this interpretation. Immediately after the passage which we quoted from the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1812, as seeming to corroborate Miss Thompson's view, Fichte introduces the concept of the Ought in such a way as to suggest a different interpretation. Freedom, he has told us, is not compelled to surrender itself to the law. In fact, there is no law, no necessity, until freedom has already made the surrender. Then for the first time we have a "factual law." Now it is only "by the factual seeing" that "the perception (*Anschauung*) of the Real¹ . . . is conditioned. Suppose now that we are to come to this seeing, that the Absolute is to make itself visible, then this is possible only on condition that freedom surrender itself to the factual law. If it does not surrender itself, there is no perception at all [*i. e.*, no world of consciousness, no actual world]. But there ought to be perception. Hence freedom ought to surrender itself. The whole factual world is grounded upon absolute freedom and upon a law for freedom; not, to be sure, so far as we have yet seen, a qualitative and material law—for the world has this within itself—but upon a merely *formal* law of the surrender. . . . What have we now gained? . . . We have reached the point of connection of the two worlds, the factual and the supra-factual. . . . Our last important discovery was a freedom either to remain free or to surrender itself to a law which restricts it. We have now determined this freedom still further and have thus removed a source of error. Freedom [we now see] is in no sense a principle that is real in itself [*i. e.*, a factual existence], but it is merely the principle [of the possibility] of various forms of *seeing*. In itself it is by no means the Real, but it is only the capacity of apprehending (*anschauen*) the Real, which proceeds from and is

¹ 'The Real' means here 'the Absolute.'

grounded upon the apprehensibility of the Real. This principle is *free*, as the ground of determination of various modes of *seeing*. . . . And, further, this variety of the *seeing* is determined in a twofold way, since it [the principle] either surrenders itself to an already existing necessity or tears itself away from such a necessity. Now it cannot tear itself away, and see by means of this tearing itself away, unless it has first surrendered itself. Hence freedom is subject to a law of necessity, which is grounded in its own nature. Thus all actual seeing is conditioned by a determination of absolute freedom, and this determination necessarily begins with a self-surrender, since the opposed determination — the tearing itself away — is conditioned by the surrender. *All* seeing, then, . . . rests upon this act of freedom as the ground of its actuality. From the Absolute itself, the *Real*, proceeds only the visibility, *i. e.*, . . . freedom, and nothing more. If now one wishes to connect the actual seeing . . . with the Real by a law, one can only say: 'The Real *ought* to be seen; freedom *ought* therefore to surrender itself to the factual law.' Absolute freedom itself is viewed as subject to a law and that a law of freedom, a mere *Ought*.'" ¹ "The ground of determinate actuality, then, must be sought in freedom, and for that matter in a law which governs freedom. . . . Freedom *cannot* surrender itself to the higher realm, unless it has first surrendered itself to the lower; for to surrender oneself to the higher means to tear oneself away from the lower.'" ²

From this it seems evident that a passage which at first appeared to offer strong evidence in favor of Miss Thompson's interpretation represents only a provisional view, which Fichte at once proceeds to modify. And the modification is suggested in two ways. In the first place, the conception of freedom which we find in the latter part of the discussion differs materially from that which appears in the earlier part. Whereas at first Fichte seems to think of freedom as mere *liberum arbitrium indifferentiæ*, the conception that appears later is the Kantian one, of moral freedom as freedom from the dominion of the lower impulses, as power to choose the higher, as ability to act in conformity with

¹ N. W., II, 431 f.

² N. W., II, 433.

the moral law. We seem to have in the passage a doctrine in which are united the two conceptions of freedom — freedom, as the principle of activity which is the ground of the world of consciousness, and human freedom, as the ability to realize the moral ideal. But if we reflect for a moment, we shall see that these two conceptions are by no means contradictory, that on his own principles Fichte is certainly justified in thus uniting them. Freedom, as the world-ground, is what is called in the *Grundlage* of 1794 the infinite outward-going activity of the Ego — the unrestrained, undefined activity, which, because it is without object and without purpose, is, as Fichte so often tells us, nothing for itself and therefore nothing at all — is, one might say, rather the possibility of activity than activity itself. Such a characterless principle may not unfitly be described as *mere* freedom, which knows no law, as liberty of indifference. But, as we saw in the preceding chapter, Fichte is by no means satisfied to describe his ultimate principle in this way. The absolute Ego is a provisional conception, and it is later replaced, or at least supplemented, by the concept of the Ego as Idea, which creates obstacles as a means to the exercise of its activity, which limits itself in order to realize itself. This relation between the conceptions of the absolute Ego and the Ego as Idea helps us to understand the doctrine of freedom in the passage under consideration. For human freedom, as the power to escape from the dominion of the lower impulse, as the ability to realize, in some measure, the ideals which we set before ourselves, is simply the expression, in individual form, of the principle which is active throughout the whole course of human history and which makes of this history a continuous overcoming of limitations. Hence we have in this passage precisely the same transformation of the first provisional conception of freedom that we found in the *Grundlage*. True freedom, like the true Ego, is possible only through the presence of an obstacle to be overcome, of a lower impulse to be subdued. Hence true freedom, like the true Ego, is subject to law. In one sense, as Fichte says, freedom is free either to realize itself or not to realize itself. But, in another sense, we may say that it *must* realize itself, that otherwise it is

not true freedom at all ; for this consists in tearing oneself away from the seductions of the lower in response to the call of the higher. "Hence freedom is subject to a law of necessity, which is grounded in its own nature." In spite of what was said at first of the freedom to remain free or to surrender itself, it is really involved in the conception of freedom that it surrender itself.

We have said that the modification of the concept of freedom is suggested in the passage in two ways. One of these we have just considered ; what is the other ? It is found in the assertion that the Absolute *ought* to manifest itself. "Es soll dazu [zu einer Anschauung] kommen."¹ "The Real *ought* to be seen ; freedom *ought* therefore to surrender itself to the factual law." Here, Fichte says, "absolute freedom itself is viewed as subject to a law." This law, however, he describes, not as a law of necessity, but as "a law of freedom, a mere *Ought*." This seems, at first glance, to suggest a rather different point of view from the one that we have just been considering. There, Fichte said that in order that there may be true freedom, there must be this world of ours, this system of finite consciousnesses, in and through which the ideal of freedom may be gradually realized. On this view, the tendency to self-realization is involved in the very nature of freedom, so that from this nature the existence of the world follows necessarily. Here, however, he speaks of the law to which freedom is subject as a 'mere Ought,' which would seem to suggest that although there *ought* to be a world, although the Absolute *ought* to manifest itself, still the relation between it and its manifestation is contingent rather than necessary — rests upon an arbitrary act of freedom.

So it seems at first thought. But a little reflection will convince us that this cannot be Fichte's meaning. No one would admit more readily than he that there can be, for the Absolute, no Ought in the sense of an external command. To say that "the Real ought to be seen," can mean only that the tendency to self-manifestation is involved in the very nature of this Real. Thus we come to the same interpretation which we formerly gained by a different method ; and the entire passage, far from

¹ N. W., II, 431.

being an argument for the contingency of the world's existence, is seen to be an expression of the doctrine that this existence is necessarily involved in the nature of the Absolute itself.

The same thought is emphasized in many other passages from the later writings.¹ In the *Wissenschaftslehre in ihrem allgemeinen Umriss*, we are told that the *schema* — which is another expression for knowing, as the *Dasein* of the Absolute — is, “merely through the fact that God is; and if God is, it is impossible that the *schema* should not be. We should by no means think of it as an effect, produced by a special act of God, in which he transforms himself within himself; but we should think of it as an immediate consequence of his being.”² Again, in *Das Wesen des Gelehrten* of 1805, Fichte says, “The world is the manifestation . . . or outer existence (*Existenz*) of the divine life.” This life “manifests itself just as it actually is and lives within itself, and can manifest itself in no other way.”³ Hence between its true inner being and its outer manifestation, there is no arbitrary choice (*grundlose Willkür*), in consequence of which it reveals itself only in part and partly conceals itself. But its manifestation, *i. e.*, the world, is conditioned solely by the two factors of its own inner essence and the unchangeable laws of its expression. . . . God manifests himself as God can manifest himself. His whole inconceivable nature comes forth without division and without repression, in so far as it can come forth in a mere manifestation. The divine life in itself . . . is a self-enclosed unity, without mutability or change. In its manifestation it becomes . . . an infinitely developing and ever ascending life in an endless time-process.”⁴ And in the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1804 we have the following emphatic statement: “If you posit the pure immanent being as the Absolute, Substance, God, . . . and the appearance, *i. e.*, the . . . inner genetic construction of the Absolute, as the revela-

¹ I consider this question (as to the contingency of the actual world) simply with reference to the second period. My reason for this is that the later writings suggest the doctrine of contingency more strongly than the earlier ones do; and since I hope to be able to show that even in the later works Fichte does not really hold this doctrine, it seems hardly necessary to undertake the easier task of showing it for the earlier works.

² S. W., II, 696.

³ The italics are mine.

⁴ S. W., VI, 361 f.

tion and expression of God, then the latter is seen to be absolutely necessary and to be grounded in the nature of the Absolute itself. This insight into the absolute inner necessity . . . is a characteristic that distinguishes the *Wissenschaftslehre* from all other systems whatsoever. In all others without exception, there is, besides the absolute substance, an absolute contingency." We cannot emphasize too strongly the necessity of the manifestation. Thought struggles against this conception "with all its might. For freedom is always the last thing that we are willing to give up; and if we cannot save it for ourselves, we try at least to find a refuge for it in God."¹

To these passages we may add one more, from the *Anweisung zum seligen Leben*: "God himself—i. e., the inner essence of the Absolute, *which is distinguished from its outer existence only for our finitude*²—cannot destroy this absolute fusion of the essence with the form. To our first, merely factual, way of looking at it, his existence seems to be factual and contingent (*zufällig*). But for real thinking, which alone is decisive, it is not contingent; it exists, and it could not be otherwise; *it must follow necessarily from the inner essence*. In consequence of God's inner essence, then, this inner essence is inseparably united with the form." Paraphrasing the opening words of the Gospel according to John, Fichte continues: "In the beginning, wholly independent of all possibility of the opposite, independent of all arbitrariness, all chance, and thus of all time, grounded in the inner necessity of the divine essence itself, was the form. And the form was with God . . . and the form itself was God; thus God came forth in it just as he is in himself."³

These passages show that Fichte often conceived the relation between the *Sein* and *Dasein* of the Absolute as necessary rather than contingent. And it seems to me that it is possible to interpret what he says about freedom so that it will harmonize with this conception. Two considerations may be suggested that will enable us, I think, to reconcile his doctrine of freedom with his theory of a necessary relation between the Absolute and its mani-

¹N. W., II, 223. It is obvious that the freedom of which Fichte is speaking here, is freedom in the sense of liberty of indifference.

²The italics are mine.

³S. W., V, 510.

festation. In the first place let us ask ourselves what is the essential meaning of the statement, so often made by him, that freedom is the ground of actual existence. There are two or three passages in which he compares his philosophy with that of Spinoza and declares that he is able to do what Spinoza does not succeed in doing — that is, to pass from the Absolute to the individual — solely because he makes use of the conception of freedom, which Spinoza ignores. *E. g.*, in the *Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre* he says, "The changeless does not pass over into the changeable, for thus it would cease to be the changeless. . . . But it remains for itself, enclosed within itself, like itself and itself *alone*. Moreover, the world is not a reflection, expression, revelation, symbol, . . . of the eternal; for the eternal cannot reflect itself in broken rays. But this world is the image and expression of formal . . . freedom. . . . It is the conflict of being and not-being, the absolute inner contradiction. In the very first synthesis [of being and not-being] formal freedom is wholly separated from being, is for itself alone, just as being is for itself, goes its own way in the product of this synthesis."¹ The great difference between the *Wissenschaftslehre* and Spinozism is that the former employs this notion of freedom. Spinoza has no "point of transition from substance to accident. He does not even ask for such a transition. . . . Substance and accident are not really distinguished [in his system]. . . . In order to get a distinction, he makes being, as accident, dirempt itself into numerous modifications. . . . Now if being is thus dirempted by absolute necessity and if it does not exist (*existieren*) otherwise, how," we may ask Spinoza, "do you come to think of it as the One, and what truth has this thought of yours? Or if it is in itself one, as you maintain, whence arise in it the diremption and the *opposition* of a world of extension and a world of thought? As a matter of fact, you are unconsciously employing a conception which you explicitly reject throughout your system — namely, formal freedom, being and not-being, the fundamental form of knowing, in which lies the necessity of diremption. . . . The *Wissenschaftslehre*, however, posits this

¹ S. W., II, 86 f.

formal freedom as connecting link and regards the resulting diremption, not as the diremption of absolute being, but as the fundamental form which accompanies absolute knowing (the knowing of absolute being)." For the *Wissenschaftslehre*, "the accident of absolute being is not *in it*, for thus absolute being would lose its substantiality, but *outside it*, in the sphere of *formal freedom*. . . . For its existence, and it alone has existence, . . . knowing depends wholly upon itself, but not for its original determination. Hence the *accident* of absolute being is simple and unchangeable, as absolute being itself is. The changeableness has quite another source, namely, the formal freedom of *knowing*."¹

What now does Fichte mean by saying that the doctrine of freedom enables us to unite the conceptions of the eternal, changeless One and the fleeting, transitory Many? It seems to me that we can answer by referring to our previous discussion of the passage in the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1812 in which he develops his concept of freedom.² We saw there that he starts with freedom as liberty of indifference, but ends with the concept of freedom as the power to realize an ideal by subordinating the lower impulses to the higher. And we drew a parallel between this development and the development of the doctrine of the Ego in the *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*. In the *Grundlage*, the principle which is the ground of all actuality is at first described as absolute Ego, as infinite activity which contains within itself no ground of limitation. But in the progress of the argument this conception is transformed into that of the Ego as Idea, as self-realizing principle, in whose nature is contained the necessity that it shall, not simply *be*, but *be for itself*, come to consciousness of itself. And this being-for-self, this coming to self-consciousness, is possible only if it limits itself and triumphs over the limitations.

Now, when Fichte says that freedom is the ground of all *Dasein*, it seems to me that by freedom he means a self-realizing principle. It is because his philosophy, unlike Spinoza's, takes activity as its fundamental concept, because the Absolute is for him a prin-

¹ S. W., II, 88 f.

² See above, pp. 95 ff.

ciple, which, by virtue of its inmost nature, is impelled toward self-realization, it is for this reason, he says, that he is able to bridge the gulf which remains impassable for Spinoza. This is the essential meaning of his frequent assertion of the importance of the concept of freedom for his philosophy. And just as his principle of activity in the *Grundlage* is described, now as the absolute Ego, and now—more adequately—as the Idea of the Ego, so in speaking of freedom, he sometimes tells us that it is a mere undifferentiated activity, and sometimes that it is a principle which tends toward self-realization. In the first case, he describes it as liberty of indifference—absolute freedom without any law. In the second case, he shows us that true freedom is not power to do anything whatsoever, the mere possibility of everything and of nothing, but power to realize an ideal; and in order that freedom may be this, it must create and overcome obstacles. It is therefore essentially, fundamentally, a self-manifesting principle; the existence of the world is not contingent, but is inextricably bound up with the very nature of freedom.

This is the first point which I wished to suggest as helping us to reconcile Fichte's concept of freedom with his doctrine of the necessary existence of the world. We can see now that when he speaks of a "freedom to bind itself or to remain free," he is emphasizing only one aspect of the ultimate principle, *i. e.*, the one which is brought out in his conception of the absolute Ego; he is reminding us that there is nothing outside it which can compel it to manifest itself, that it is bound by no external laws. And when, on the other hand, he tells us that God's *Dasein* follows inevitably from his *Sein*, he is emphasizing the other aspect, which finds expression in the doctrine of the Ego as Idea; he is pointing out that, although there is nothing outside it which compels it to manifest itself, yet its self-manifestation follows inevitably—from its own inner nature.

The second point to be suggested is furnished by Fichte himself in another discussion from the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1812.¹ Here he is concerned once more with the question how the changeless One can reveal itself in change and manifoldness.

¹ N. W., II, 326-346.

The Absolute, he says, has necessary being ; it could not not-be. As contrasted with this, the being of the manifestation or the being of knowing, is factual. It is a *fact* that there is knowing ; knowing vouches for its own existence : but it has no necessary existence as the Absolute has. From the fact that there *is* something else than the Absolute, we learn that something else *can be*.¹

Now the Absolute appears in its image (*Bild*), or knowing, as it is in itself ; therefore the image must be one and changeless. But the image of the Absolute is never actual ; it is always *to be* ; hence it is an eternal becoming.² How can we reconcile these two aspects of the image — its changeless unity and its changing manifoldness ? Since we are now in the realm of appearance (the appearance of the Absolute), we are in the realm of the factual. Hence the respect in which the image is a manifold must be given as a fact. It is a *fact* that the image appears to *itself* (*we* are conscious of *ourselves*). But if it does this, then it appears in a new image — a *Bild vom Bilde* — and in this new image there may well enough be infinite change. Thus what would not be possible for the Absolute itself, is possible in its appearance ; here, unity can coexist with manifoldness. The possibility of change and manifoldness is grounded in the fixed being of the Absolute, but it is only in the image that being actually *becomes* change and manifoldness.³

That the absolute being appears, is, as we have seen, a fact. Hence, "from the point of view of our consciousness, the appearance is something that could also not-be, something *contingent*. But there is a higher question : Is the appearance in itself contingent ? *Can* God appear, or also not-appear ? And is the appearance merely an act of his freedom, *in the lower signification of the word*⁴ — not in the sense of an absolute life that is conceived through itself, but in the sense of a life that is absolutely *without law* ? Has God freedom of this second sort, or is his appearing necessary (in the sense which we have just attributed to the word 'necessary') ? It is easy to see that the latter

¹ N. W., II, 328 f.

² N. W., II, 337-339.

³ N. W., II, 334.

⁴ The italics in this phrase are mine.

is the case: God is *what* he is, simply through the fact *that* he is.¹ Through his merely formal being, his whole being is given. Now, among other things, he appears. Hence, as certain as it is that he appears, so certain is it that he appears by virtue of (*durch*) his absolute being. And, inasmuch as he does appear, he cannot not-appear. The fact (*Faktum*) is an absolutely necessary one."² At this point Fichte begs the reader not to misunderstand the nature of the argument. It is not as if "we had a real concept of the Absolute and found in it some characteristic (*x*) in consequence of which the Absolute must appear. If this were the case, we should have inferred the necessity of the appearance quite independently of its factual givenness (*faktisches Gegebensein*). Here the case is quite different . . . All our knowing, without exception, starts from an absolute fact, the fact, namely, that the *appearance* knows about itself, appears *to itself*. . . . If one posits the appearance of the Absolute as something contingent, perhaps also as an historical event, as something that was not and once upon a time came to be, one puts this appearance into time and gets a time in which God did not appear and another in which he appeared—the ordinary concept of creation. Thus one falls into absolute incomprehensibility. According to our theory, the appearance is with God and is utterly inseparable from him—the appearance, which, through its appearance to itself, tells forth itself and him (the eternal *Word* with God). Neither God nor it is in time; on the contrary, it is only within it that time develops—not, indeed, in so far as God is in it [in the appearance], but in so far as *it* appears *to itself*.³

This passage, it seems to me, is of great value in helping us to understand what Fichte means by the frequent statement that the entire realm of the factual, of existent reality, rests upon an act of freedom. He makes it apparent here that he is not using 'freedom' as synonymous with 'liberty of indifference'; this, he says, is the lower meaning of the word. God could not be, with-

¹ "Schlechthin dadurch, *dass* er ist." It is unfortunate that the only good rendering for *dadurch dass* is 'through the fact that'; for we have just been using the word 'fact' to translate Fichte's *faktisch*, which applies always to the realm of the actual, to *Dasein* as distinguished from *Sein*.

² N. W., II, 343.

³ N. W., II, 344 f.

out manifesting himself; the factual realm is not contingent in the sense that there might equally well have been no world at all or quite a different world from this. But, on the other hand, our only ground for *knowing* that God must manifest himself is that he does manifest himself. (Since he does reveal himself, we know that he could not remain unrevealed.) And since we start from the *fact* that there is a manifestation, from the *fact* that knowing is, and since this fact is vouched for simply by itself,¹ we say that the existence of knowing is contingent. But by this we mean merely that our assertion that there is a world of conscious experience is not supported by some other proposition which we have previously established. The absolute being is indeed the *ratio essendi* of the actual world, but it is not the *ratio cognoscendi*; the *ratio cognoscendi* of our existence is that existence itself.

It seems to me that we have now established the theory which we have been defending at length — namely, that Fichte conceives the relation between the *Sein* and *Dasein* of the Absolute as necessary, or — what is a better way of putting it — that *Sein* and *Dasein* are for him simply two aspects of the one principle, and hence that to say that the *Dasein* is contingent, in the strict sense of the term, is to talk nonsense. It remains to ask — and this is the last question that we shall have to consider — whether we can determine more exactly what Fichte means by the aspect of *Sein*.

Some of the recent discussions of the philosophy of history, particularly in Germany, have served to throw into new relief the concept of value, which plays so important a part in Fichte's philosophical system. If we say, as Fichte and many other *Geschichtsphilosophen* would, that all that is actual is this world-process, and that in this world-process certain values are more or less completely realized, a question arises which not all philosophers venture to answer, but with regard to which Fichte has taken a decided stand. The question to which I refer, is whether the (partial) realization of values in human history is something to be *understood*, or merely something to be accepted

¹ *That thought is, thought itself assures us. "Cogito, ergo sum."*

and rejoiced in. Is it merely — to use a phrase of Lotze's¹ — a 'fortunate fact' (*glückliche Thatsache*) that this world of ours, with all its failure and all its sin, nevertheless reveals some correspondence — albeit imperfect — to the absolute norms of truth, goodness, and beauty? Is it simply a fact, which we recognize joyfully, but which remains ever an unexplained mystery — for aught we know, a mere coincidence — and which can therefore give us no assurance that the future will contain any such coincidences? Or is it a fact which, as Fichte would say, we can see from the genetic point of view, a fact whose origin we can understand, so that we may have assurance with regard to the future, may look forward to new realizations of the eternal values in the world of time and space?

It is no part of my purpose to discuss this question on its merits; I have raised it simply in the hope that it may help us to understand better Fichte's conception of the ultimate principle. It is evident that Fichte himself does not regard the actualization of values merely as a happy fact. On the contrary, as all our preceding study has tended to show, he believes that the presence of value in the world-process is to be explained by the fact that the supreme value is itself the *ratio essendi* of this process. The world exists in order that the Idea of the Ego may become actual, and the Idea is itself the moving force in the process of actualization. The Idea, for Fichte, is not simply an ideal in the psychological sense — the thought of some non-existent value, which we conceive of and resolve to bring into existence. It has indeed this psychological aspect; all that we ordinarily call our ideals — intellectual, moral, æsthetic — are faint reflections of the Idea itself. But though it has this aspect, it is much more than a psychological fact. Again, it is not merely an absolute standard of value,² by which we may meas-

¹ *Logic* (translation edited by Bosanquet), 2d ed., Book I, Chap. II, § 65. Lotze himself uses the phrase merely with reference to logical values. He refers to the 'fortunate fact' that the world of actuality, which might conceivably be quite different in this respect, exhibits a considerable degree of correspondence with the logical norms.

² An objective standard, as distinguished from the subjective one that is furnished by our ideals.

ure the worth of any particular part of the world-process. This aspect, also, the Idea has ; but it is even more than this. It is, for Fichte, at once the supreme value — the absolute norm — and the directive force in human history. The *Sollen* is not a mere Ought ; it is at the same time the ground of all becoming.

In Chapter I, we expressed this thought by saying that for Fichte the clue to the nature of the ultimate principle is to be found in our ideals ; that he refuses to believe that the ideals which we are striving to attain, are of such a nature that we never can approximate to them ; but that on the contrary, he insists that they reveal to us the very principle which is at work in the world-process itself. The Idea of the Ego, which shows itself to us — though imperfectly — in our ideals of beauty, goodness, and truth (all of which may be regarded as various forms of the unity of subject and object), this Idea of the Ego is also the motive power in the history of the race.

Now if one accepts Fichte's view, one must of course say that the presence of value in the world is not a mere lucky accident, but is something which can be understood. If the supreme value is itself the ground of all that exists, we can see why it is that we find values in the realm of existence. It is true — and Fichte often asserts it in his later writings — that any particular realization of absolute values will always be to us a mystery. No science will ever be able to make intelligible the development of a great moral leader or the genesis of a supreme work of art. Before a Buddha or a *King Lear* we must always stand in silent wonder. But though we can never hope to understand in detail how a great personality or a great artistic achievement comes to be, though every particular actualization of a supreme value has, and always will have, an aspect of mystery, still the more general fact that absolute values find realization in human history, we can understand. Although we can never grasp the *how* of the realization, we can see into its *that*.

And not only can we, on Fichte's theory, understand why human life has this aspect of value, but also we are assured of the future of the race. Since the ground of the world's existence is the eternal *Ought-to-be*, we may rest in the confidence that the

future will show a continuous progress. This is one of the central doctrines of Fichte's philosophy. Human life, human history, is the progressive actualization of the eternal values, the ever fuller realization of the divine Idea.

We have said that for Fichte the ultimate principle is the quintessence of all value, and that it is at the same time the ground of the world-process. This may help us, I think, to understand in some measure the change which appears to have taken place in the second period. The distinction between the *Sein* and the *Dasein* of the Absolute, which has given much difficulty to students of Fichte and has been variously interpreted, can best be understood, it seems to me, by the aid of this conception of the ultimate principle as being at once the supreme value and the world-ground. The Absolute in its aspect of *Sein*, Fichte says, is eternal, changeless, sufficient unto itself. And just this is what we must say of an absolute value. It, too, is timeless in its nature, superior to change and decay. Again, absolute *Sein*, Fichte tells us, is unity; and if we say, as he certainly would, that the supreme value is the unity of subject and object and that all our ideals are so many various forms of this unity, then we can understand how he feels justified in describing absolute *Sein* as unitary. On the contrary, the *Dasein* of the Absolute is at once changeless and changing, one and many. The *Dasein* is the supreme value as self-realizing principle, as manifesting itself in the world-process. It has, therefore, these two opposed aspects. On the one hand, it is changeless, eternal, even though it assumes the form of time. The æsthetic value of Booth's Hamlet did not perish when death claimed the great actor himself; and Paderewski's playing of a Beethoven sonata does not lose its artistic worth when the piano-recital is over. *Even as realized in time*, then, value keeps its timeless nature. But though in this sense the *Dasein* of the Absolute is changeless, yet as world-ground it is the source of time and becoming and thus has an aspect of change and manifoldness.

But this is not all that Fichte means by his distinction between *Sein* and *Dasein*. In saying that the Absolute *is*, he is asserting something more than that value is essentially independent of time.

He is asserting that it has *being* quite independent of the fact of its realization in the world-process. But, we may ask, what kind of being is it that can be attributed to an *unrealized* value? In so far as values are realized, in *so* far they have being or actuality. But can we maintain that they have it, as unrealized? Must we not content ourselves with saying that in this case they have validity? And does not Fichte's ascription of being to the supreme value, *qua* unrealized, suggest that he has hypostatized it?

In answer to these questions, there are several things to be said. In the first place, whether or not we shall designate as 'being' the sort of reality which an unrealized value possesses, is largely a matter of convenience. Lotze, in his admirable discussion of the Platonic Ideas,¹ distinguishes 'validity' (*Geltung*) as one kind of reality, from 'being' (*Sein*) as a second, and from 'occurring' as still a third kind. Fichte, however, uses the word 'existence' (*Dasein*) for what Lotze calls 'being' and employs the word 'being' to designate another sort of reality. As we have seen, he is always very careful to distinguish these two. Existence, in his use of the term, belongs only to the actual world — the world of individual consciousness — or to the Idea in so far as it embodies itself in consciousness; the word 'being' he reserves for a reality of a different kind.

In the second place, it may be well to remember the considerations which Lotze has urged in the following words: "It must be added that we ourselves, in drawing a distinction between the reality which belongs to the Ideas and laws and that which belongs to things, and calling the one Being or Existence² and the other Validity, have so far merely discovered, thanks to the resources of our language, a convenient expression which may keep us on our guard against interchanging the two notions. The fact which the term validity expresses has lost none of that strangeness which has led to its being confounded, as we have seen, with existence. It is merely that we have been so long accustomed to it; we . . . take it as a matter of course that the

¹*Op. cit.*, Book III, Chap. II.

² For the single word *Sein*, which Lotze uses, the translator employs the two words 'being' and 'existence.'

content of manifold perceptions and phenomena does invariably adapt itself to general conceptions and can be read by us in the light of general laws. . . . But that this should be the case, that there should be universal laws, which have not themselves existence like things and which nevertheless rule the operation of things, — remains for a mind which realizes its meaning, a profoundly mysterious fact.”¹

Lotze is speaking especially of meanings and general laws; but what he says is equally applicable to values. That there should be objective values, “which have not themselves existence like things and which nevertheless” are valid for the world of things, values which we may employ in estimating the worth of any particular element of this world — this, too, is “for a mind which realizes its meaning, a profoundly mysterious fact.” Little wonder that the moral law, with its unconditional demand for realization in the world of fact, should seem to men not less, but more, real than this world and should therefore be said to have *being*. In short, as Lotze’s words imply, the distinction which we make between existence and validity is not in any sense the solution of a problem, but merely the statement of one. What kind of reality we ought to attribute to an unrealized value or an undiscovered truth, is a question which it is far easier to ask than to answer.

In the third place — and this is the chief thing to be said in regard to our problem — it must never be forgotten that Fichte’s ultimate principle is not merely an unrealized, but rather a self-realizing value. This, it seems to me, is the great difference between the point of view from which our questions have been put and the point of view which Fichte takes, which all of us must take — at least for the time being — if we would understand him. For if the supreme value is at the same time a self-realizing principle, then it *has* some other kind of reality than that of a mere value. There are three different conceptions for which we need appropriate expressions. First, one may be thinking of value merely as such, without reference to its realization or non-realization. Of it one may say that it is *valid*; for it has validity

¹ *Op. cit.*, Book III, Chap. II, § 320.

quite irrespective of its realization. Secondly, one may wish to speak of a value which is already realized, which has assumed individual form and is connected with some definite point in time. To it we may ascribe *actuality* or *existence*. The ideal, we say, has been made actual; the value really exists, is incorporated into the actual world. But thirdly, one may wish to bring out the thought that the value is itself a force, an active principle; that its realization depends upon itself rather than upon something other. In the second case that we have mentioned, the value may be realized through *my* activity, through *my* choice. So far then as *it* is concerned, its actualization is merely contingent. There is no necessary connection between the value itself and the fact that it is realized; that it is realized, is owing solely to another than itself. But if now one wishes to suggest that the actualization is not something contingent, that it is not a mere accident that absolute values are realized in this world, that it does not depend upon the will of this or that particular individual, but that there is something in the nature of value itself by virtue of which the realization takes place, it is necessary to employ some other term besides 'validity,' on the one hand, and 'existence' or 'actuality' on the other. Fichte suggests the word 'being.' He distinguishes it carefully from 'existence'; 'being,' as he uses it, does not imply reality in time, does not imply actuality of any sort. It is not that which *is*, but that which *is to be* actual; in this sense it is distinguished from the realm of existing fact.¹ But again, it is that which *is to be*, and not merely that which *ought to be*; in this sense it is distinguished as self-realizing principle, from a mere value.

The identification of the *Ought-to-be* and the *Is-to-be* is the essence of Fichte's conception of the ultimate principle. In his terminology the same word is employed to express both ideas. His *sollen*, corresponding, as it does, both to our 'shall' — in many uses — and to our 'ought,' unites in one word conceptions

¹ "What *is*, is not that which appears to us as existing, nor that which all of us or even the noblest and best among us *are*, but that toward which we strive and shall strive throughout eternity. . . . The *moral law* is the image of a supersensuous, purely spiritual [reality], thus of something which is not, but . . . is simply to become" (*Die Staatslehre*, S. W., IV, 387 f.).

which the English speech indicates by two separate words, and which even the German language, in the ordinary usage, represents by different forms of the same root. *Das Sollen*, in Fichte's terminology, signifies both what ought to be and what is to be. Availing himself of the fact that, in his language, the same root has the two significations, he unites these widely differing meanings in a single word, and thus gains the best possible expression for his thought.

We must, however, consider more at length the question whether, in ascribing being to his supreme principle, Fichte has hypostatized the absolute value, has transformed it into a substance. It is sometimes urged that the later writings represent a marked change of doctrine, in that what was formerly only an ideal or norm has been converted into an existent reality.¹ This charge I cannot admit. It seems to me that there is really no more tendency toward hypostatization in the second period than in the first. In both the supreme value is conceived as self-realizing principle; and if this be to hypostatize it, it is hypostatized in the earlier writings as truly as in the later. The principal change which takes place in the second period is this: Fichte brings out the thought that inasmuch as the supreme value is at the same time the ground of the world's existence, it may be said to have *being*, which seems to be distinct from validity, on the one hand, and from actuality — existence in time — on the other.² But except for the more frequent ascription of

Cf. Lask: "The 'whole' of knowing, which constitutes the Idea, is hypostatized" in the later writings, is made "into a metaphysical reality" (*Fichtes Idealismus und die Geschichte*, 177). "His concept of the Absolute proceeds, indeed, from an hypostatization, but it is an hypostatization of the Idea and not of the formal Ego" (*Op. cit.*, 183). Rickert (*Fichtes Atheismusstreit und die Kantische Philosophie*, *Kant-Studien*, IV, 137 ff.; also printed separately) seems to incline toward the same view, though he does not commit himself to it so definitely. In the period of the controversy with regard to atheism, he says, Fichte's "philosophical concept of God" was "that of a supersensuous order [which was, however, *ordo ordinans*] and not that of a supersensuous reality." But "a few years later his own thoughts assumed a form which many regard as equivalent to a virtual abandonment of this point of view, and in which at any rate Fichte passes far beyond the limitation which he has here placed upon himself" (*Kant-Studien*, IV, 158 ff.).

² The distinction between being and actuality Fichte makes definitely. That between being and validity he does not make explicitly; but there is no reason to think that the being which he ascribes to his ultimate principle is conceived by him as mere validity.

being to the ultimate principle (and the somewhat greater tendency to conceive its relation to the actual world abstractly), his position does not differ from that which he held in the first period. The principle is conceived, in the earlier writings, as having reality in the same sense as in the later works. The moral world-order, the *ordo ordinans*, which builds itself up in us, is certainly something more than a mere ideal or a mere norm; it has some other kind of reality than mere validity or than the reality of a psychological state. And when Fichte says, in the *Gerichtliche Verantwortungsschrift*, that the Godhead, which he has identified with this moral order, is, so far as its matter is concerned, "nothing but consciousness, pure intelligence, spiritual life and activity," and that it is only with reference to limitations and conceivability that one must refuse to call God conscious,¹ he is making of his ultimate principle just as much a being as he does at any time in the second period.² The *assertion* that God has being is indeed almost wholly confined to the later writings.³ But Fichte makes

¹ The passage is quoted above, p. 58.

² The thoughtful reader is not in much danger of being misled by Fichte's occasional reference, in some of the later works, to 'Providence' and the 'divine plan.' Sometimes he speaks of the Idea as 'God's plan for the progress of the race.' But such expressions occur only in the popular writings and are obviously an attempt to adapt his doctrine to the point of view of his hearers. Only the most superficial criticism could interpret him as meaning that the God of the later works is a consciousness which sets before itself certain ends, chooses appropriate means for their attainment, and in this way guides the current of human history. On at least one occasion Fichte takes pains to make this clear. In *Das Wesen des Gelehrten* (1805), he explains that in speaking of God's 'plan' he is using the word in another sense from that which is indicated when we talk of human plans. He has just told his hearers that the sense-world is simply a means to the realization of the divine Idea; and having said this, he goes on as follows: "Reason is able to comprehend the connection between means and purpose only by thinking of an understanding which has conceived the purpose. . . . Hence, on the analogy with our understanding, one thinks of God as conceiving the moral life of man as the sole purpose for the sake of which he has manifested himself and has called everything else except this moral life into existence. [Now we represent the matter to ourselves thus], not as if it were really so (as if God thought in the way in which finite beings think, and as if for him existence were something different from the idea of existence), but simply because we are not able to conceive the relation in any other way. And in this absolutely necessary mode of representation, human life becomes, as it ought to be, the Idea, God's chief thought in producing the world, the purpose and the plan, whose carrying out God decreed when he decreed the world" (S. W., VI, 367).

³ We have seen that there are a few passages in the *Grundlage* of 1794, in which Fichte designates the supreme principle as 'being.' See above, p. 81.

it very clear that by 'being' he means something other than actual existence; and we have therefore interpreted his use of the term as an attempt to indicate a third mode of reality, in addition to actuality and validity. Now, inasmuch as this third sort of reality is ascribed to the absolute value by virtue of its being regarded as the ground of all existence, and inasmuch as Fichte certainly so regards it in the first period, it seems permissible to say that the recognition of the supreme value as having 'being' is really implicit in the earlier writings, though it is seldom explicit there.

On these grounds I am disposed to maintain that we cannot say that Fichte hypostatizes the absolute value in the second period, unless we are prepared to admit that he does the same thing in the first. The question then remains, whether he really does this in the earlier writings, whether to conceive of the absolute value as *ordo ordinans* is to hypostatize it. And upon this question there will doubtless be differences of opinion. Certain it is that in the second period as well as in the first, Fichte conceives his principle as activity rather than a being which acts, as life rather than something which has life.¹ A thing, a substance, — in the most generally accepted meaning of the word 'substance,' — it is not. But on the other hand it is real, and real in a different sense from that in which a mere norm may be said to be real. Rickert seems to think that the 'supersensuous order' of the *Gerichtliche Verantwortungsschrift*, although it is *ordo ordinans*, is still not a 'supersensuous reality';² and if one accepts this

¹ This, as we have said, has been proved by Loewe. See above, pp. 73 f.

² See above, p. 113, note 1. As we saw, Rickert would probably maintain that although the moral world-order of the *Atheismusstreit* is not an hypostatization, Fichte does hypostatize his principle in the later writings. This position seems to me quite untenable. The 'being' of the later works is also only *ordo ordinans*, self-realizing value. There is nothing that Fichte says in the second period — except such references as those to the 'divine plan,' which we explained above, p. 114, note 2 — which any more strongly suggests a personification of the principle, than his explanation, in the *Gerichtliche Verantwortungsschrift*, of the sense in which he denies that God has consciousness. If therefore one says, with Rickert, that the self-establishing moral order is not a supersensuous reality, one has no ground, it seems to me, for asserting that Fichte hypostatizes his principle in the second period. (It must be remembered that Rickert does not definitely assert this, and my inferences regarding his position may not be justified.)

distinction, one must say, I think, that Fichte's principle is not an hypostatization.

But the question whether we are *hypostatizing* the absolute value in thinking of it as self-realizing principle, is not, it seems to me, the main one. The central point about which the contest must be waged, is this: whether we must believe that the presence of values in human history is simply to be accepted as a fact, which it is futile for us ever to attempt to understand, or whether, on the contrary, we may assert that it is reasonable to seek an explanation for this fact.¹ Inasmuch as philosophy is the effort to understand the facts of experience, to interpret them so as to make them intelligible to ourselves, it certainly seems on the face of it not unreasonable that a philosopher should try to understand the presence of value in human history. And since the only justification that a philosophical formula can hope for, is that it helps to make certain facts of experience more intelligible than they would otherwise be, the theory that the supreme value is itself a motive power will have strong claims to consideration, provided, first, that it is in itself intelligible, and secondly, that it really helps us to understand the presence of value in the world-process.

The two points, then, at which Fichte's conception is liable to attack are these: one might maintain in the first place, that the notion of value as self-realizing principle has no meaning for us — that it is a mere form of words, which does not stand for any definite idea; and in the second place, that even if we waive this objection, it does not explain what it professes to explain. With regard to the first point, it must be confessed that the conception of self-realizing value, of a moral *ordo ordinans*, is not a per-

¹ There is, of course, the still more fundamental question, whether we have the right to say that any values are objective. That certain elements of the actual world have subjective value, that we feel them to be valuable, is an indubitable fact, guaranteed by experience itself. But whether, in addition, they have objective worth, and whether — to speak more generally — there are any objective norms, this is a question, the consideration of which naturally precedes the discussion of the problem to which we have referred in the text. But inasmuch as those who charge Fichte with having hypostatized his absolute value, are apparently agreed that objective values do find actualization in the world-process, it does not seem necessary to consider this question here.

fectly definite and altogether comprehensible notion. It is evident that Fichte himself would admit this up to a certain point. But at the same time he would maintain that the vagueness of the notion can readily enough be accounted for in harmony with his own principles and hence should not be regarded as an insuperable objection to his theory. In the *Bestimmung des Menschen*, one of the popular works of the second period, he designates the ultimate principle as the supreme and living Will, whose activity is the world-process. But he points out at the same time that we cannot attribute personality to it and that we can never hope to comprehend its nature. "How thou art for thyself and appearest to thyself, I can never see, just as I can never become thou. . . . What I comprehend, becomes, through my very comprehension of it, finite. . . . I have only a consciousness which proceeds discursively and I cannot conceive any other kind. How could I ascribe this consciousness to thee? In the concept of personality limitation is involved. How could I attribute personality to thee without attributing limitation?"¹

What Fichte would say, then, is this. The concept must be vague, because it stands for that which is not a part of our experience. To assert that the absolute norm is a self-realizing principle is another way of saying that the ground of all actuality is a supreme Will which is identical with the supreme value. Now, in our experience will and value stand apart. Granted — what Fichte would of course admit — that we are, in our essence, *will*, it is nevertheless true that this will is directed toward values which we apprehend as *independent of it*. It is this dualism of will and value in human experience² which makes it so difficult for us to conceive that ultimately — in their deepest meaning — these two may be one.³ But it is of course a cardinal doctrine of

¹ S. W., II, 304 f.

² Even here, there is a sense in which it may be said that value has motive power. The feeling of value is an indispensable factor in volition, is the moving force in all choice. In this psychological sense, value is, in our experience, a self-realizing principle. Nevertheless, it is always felt here, as other than our will; the dualism of will and value is characteristic of all our volition.

³ The old question whether right is right because God wills it, or whether, on the contrary, God wills it because it is right, would be answered from Fichte's point of view by saying that neither of these is the ground of the other, but that the two are simply different expressions for the same thing. Cf. Lotze, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Religion* (translation edited by Ladd, 1886), § 81.

Fichte's philosophy that the oppositions which we find in human experience point to an underlying unity, that all difference implies oneness.

That will and value form a duality simply *for us*, is occasionally suggested by Fichte himself. In a passage previously quoted from the *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*, he says, "The being of life . . . becomes final purpose merely in the synthesis with the becoming as the form of life. Outside this synthesis, beyond this form, we must not speak of a final purpose, but only of a being pure and simple."¹ This contains by implication the thought that what is apprehended *by us* as final purpose, as the goal of all our striving, as the supreme value, is itself the ground of all actuality. The infinite Will is not a will that apprehends values as distinct from it and as issuing commands to it; it is itself the quintessence of all value.

The second objection which we have mentioned as likely to be brought against Fichte's theory is that this conception of a supreme Will, which is at the same time *der Inbegriff aller Werte*, does not, even if we grant that it has some meaning, explain to our full satisfaction the presence of value in the world-process. If the objection were raised, it would probably take this form: we now have the difficulty, it would be urged, of understanding why the absolute values do not receive completer realization than is the case. If the ground of the world-process is the supreme value, it is easy to see why values should receive actualization in this process; but it is not easy to understand why they should have just so much actualization and no more — why there should be so many parts of the process whose value is negative rather than positive. In other words, it would be maintained, the problem of evil is the rock upon which our theory must shatter.

It would be asserting too much to say that Fichte has given us a complete solution of this problem. His own answer to the objection is that evil exists precisely in order that it may be overcome. "All death in nature is birth. . . . It is not death that kills, but the more living life, which, concealed behind the old, begins and develops itself. Death and birth are simply the

¹ S. W., II, 683. The passage is quoted above (pp. 79 f.) at greater length.

struggle of life with itself, in order that it may manifest itself in ever greater glory and greater likeness to itself.”¹ In other words, Fichte maintains that the good which has triumphed over evil is somehow richer and fuller for that very triumph. And however unable one may be to accept his answer as perfectly satisfactory, one can hardly maintain, I think, that any of the other ‘solutions’ of the problem of evil is freer from difficulty than this one. Apparently one must choose between accepting a partial solution and giving up the problem as utterly insoluble. Many, indeed, in our own generation, have preferred the second alternative. Resigning all attempts to understand why there is value in the world, and why there is no more than there is, they have contented themselves simply with recognizing the fact that the absolute norms do find realization, to a certain limited extent, in the sphere of existence. The difficulty of explaining both the presence of good and the presence of evil in the realm of existence is surely great enough to give all of us a certain sympathy with this attitude. What I cannot understand, however, is how some of those who adopt it can declare that there is for them no problem of evil ; that by their acceptance of the world-process as a factual ‘given,’ for which they do not attempt to find an explanation, they have avoided the problem which forms so serious a difficulty for any one who tries to frame a theory of the nature of the world-ground. How one can say this, I repeat, is difficult for me to understand. *Of course*, one can avoid any problem whatever, by simply declining to consider it ; but we do not make the problem of evil non-existent by employing any such easy device as this. By refusing to look through the field-glass, the commanding general may avoid seeing the enemy in the distance ; but he has not thereby warded off the danger which impends. The only thinker for whom there is no problem of evil, would be one — if such a one could be found — who denied the objectivity of all values. For him there would be nothing but fact, and mere fact has no aspect of value ; there is therefore neither good nor bad, and hence no problem of evil. But for one who admits objective values at all, for him there is the problem — whether or

¹ *Die Bestimmung des Menschen*, S. W., II, 317 f.

not he recognizes it as such — how it is that certain elements in this world of ours have an aspect of value, how it is that there is good in the world and how it is that there is bad.¹

It is the aspect of value in human experience which Fichte takes as the clue to the meaning of that experience. Every life is, in its essence, the striving to realize ideals (though often mistaken ones). This suggests that the key to the meaning of the world itself is to be found in the conception of an infinite striving toward an infinitely distant goal. The transformation of the original datum which he suggests, is simply this: that whereas for the individual striving, the goal is conceived or imagined, so that we have a duality of will and value, for the infinite striving this duality does not exist. We cannot suppose that the world-ground is altogether of the same sort as the human will. If all reality is to be referred to a unitary principle, — and this, as we know, is the fundamental assumption of Fichte's philosophy, — then the supreme Will and the supreme value cannot stand apart.

But, it may be asked, in describing his principle as Will, does not Fichte virtually imply that it is a conscious being? He does not himself designate it as such, because he thinks of consciousness as always involving opposition. But is not his principle, after all, what we mean by a conscious being, though its consciousness may be of a higher order than ours? If this question is answered in the affirmative, then we have virtually admitted that Fichte's conception of the Absolute has been reached by the hypostatization of a value.

With regard to this question, we must in the first place reiterate our assertion that if this be true, it is at any rate just as true of the first period as of the second. Whatever Fichte may mean by saying, in the *Gerichtliche Verantwortungsschrift*, that the Godhead (the moral world-order), so far as its matter is concerned, is "mere consciousness, . . . pure intelligence," but that it is impossible for us to conceive "how it knows itself and others," and that hence we must refuse to attribute personality and con-

¹ It should be noted that the aspect of this problem which men have chiefly considered, is, How comes there to be evil in the world? The presence of good is not usually regarded as furnishing any difficulty. But it will readily be seen that this naïve assumption obscures a very real problem.

sciousness to it — whatever he may mean by this, there is no reason to suppose that he is giving us a different doctrine from that of the *Bestimmung des Menschen*, which describes the Absolute as supreme Will, and yet points out that we cannot comprehend its nature and may not ascribe consciousness and personality to it.¹

But when we have said this, the real question still remains to be answered: does Fichte conceive of his Absolute as a higher sort of consciousness — the 'supra-conscious,' if one prefers the term? It is difficult to express our meaning if the word 'consciousness' is to be tabooed; but the issue, it seems to me, is fairly clear. The question is whether Fichte believes that there is a sort of universal consciousness, in which all finite ones are included — a consciousness which differs from ours in that in it all oppositions are harmonized, and that hence the supreme values are not set over against it as norms, but are one with it. Does he recognize such a universal consciousness? Or would he rather say that there is no consciousness save the many finite ones; that the Absolute is conscious only in these; and that, therefore, even for it, there is no consciousness in which all differences are harmonized?

My answer to this question is given with some hesitation. Fichte has not thrown much light upon it, and I do not feel sure that my interpretation is correct. On the one hand, the passages to which we have just referred certainly seem to indicate a belief in the reality of a higher order of consciousness — a supra-conscious being, if one will consent to take the word 'being' without any implication of substantiality.² But on the other hand, we must remember that the Absolute *exists* only in and through finite consciousnesses; that except as it is in them, Fichte speaks of it, not as *Dasein*, but as *Sein*. This would seem to imply that

¹ A passage similar to these two occurs in a letter from Fichte to Reinhold, written in 1800 (*Leben und Briefwechsel*, 2te Aufl., II, 278).

² We said above that Fichte's principle is conceived as activity rather than something which acts. But the same thing should be said of the human being; it too Fichte thinks of as life, activity, consciousness, not as a substantial self which possesses these as attributes. It is hence no less accurate to speak of a supra-conscious being than to speak of a conscious one.

there is no consciousness of any sort except in the *Dasein* of the Absolute, *i. e.*, in the actual world of finite beings.

It is this second consideration which has decided the matter for me. While I admit that there is room for difference of opinion, it seems to me that Fichte does not recognize a universal consciousness — one in which all the oppositions of human experience are resolved — as existent, as actual. Such universal consciousness is the goal toward which the world-process (the *Dasein* of the Absolute) is tending, but it will never be attained. The Absolute is itself conscious only in and through us ; thus, its consciousness is partial, fragmentary, characterized by the opposition of subject and object.

And yet Fichte would certainly not say that the all-embracing, all-harmonizing consciousness is a *mere* ideal. For this would be to leave the question in doubt, whether the world-process has tended and will continue to tend, toward the goal of perfect unity. And this question, he would say, is not to be left in doubt. The certainty that there is, and that there will be, progress, that the world-process is *in its essence* an approximation to the perfect harmony of subject and object, this triumphant certainty he expresses when he speaks of the 'being' of the Absolute as distinguished from its 'existence.' The conviction that the presence of value in the realm of the actual is neither an accident nor merely the result of the individual choices of isolated, self-dependent consciousnesses, this conviction is the heart and soul of Fichte's doctrine of the being of the Absolute. The assertion that God has being is not the assertion of an actually existent universal consciousness ; it is rather the declaration that the universal consciousness, the "unity of the pure spirit," in which "all individuals are included," is not merely that which *ought* to be, but also that which in ever increasing measure (though never perfectly) *is* to be.

NOTE A.

THE VARIOUS FORMS OF KANT'S CONCEPTION OF *Intellektuelle Anschauung*.

The interpretation of Kant's *intellektuelle Anschauung* which has been briefly outlined in the text differs somewhat from that given by Thiele in his thorough and suggestive study of the problem.¹ As we have already pointed out, Thiele recognizes three stages in the development of the doctrine. In the first, "the content of intellectual perception is *given* without receptivity, that of perceptive understanding without spontaneity."² In the second, "intellectual perception . . . posits its content *by self-activity*."³ In the third, "the content and the object of intellectual perception are identical."⁴ In opposition to Thiele, I suggested in Chapter I, that it is better to recognize two main stages in the development of the doctrine, rather than three. Several considerations have led me to this opinion. In the first place, it seems to me that it is not well to draw too sharp a line between Thiele's second and third stages. Even if we admit that they represent somewhat different points of view, they are very closely related and might better be regarded as two slightly

¹ *Kant's intellektuelle Anschauung als Grundbegriff seines Kriticismus*, Halle, 1876.

² *Op. cit.*, 18. 'Receptivity' is used here in a different sense from that which I have given to it. In denying that the *intellektuelle Anschauung* of the first stage has receptivity, Thiele does not intend to assert the presence in it of any element of spontaneity. All that he means, is that the nature of the given is not changed by having to conform to a subjective mode of perception. He refuses to call *intellektuelle Anschauung* 'receptivity' because the latter term seems to him to imply that what is received, must be phenomenal. In the strict sense this is of course true. Apparently, however, Kant did not at first see this difficulty: for him, in the earlier stages of his thought, objects are phenomenal, not because they are *received*, but because they are received by *subjective* forms of perception. It seems to me, then, that we are justified in speaking of the intellectual perception of the first stage as pure receptivity.

We need not stop to consider Thiele's rather fanciful interpretation of the phrase *intuitiver Verstand* (*Op. cit.*, 25 ff.). As he himself virtually admits, it is hardly justified by Kant's ordinary use of the term, which makes it synonymous with *intellektuelle Anschauung*.

³ *Op. cit.*, 34.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, 94.

different phases of a second main stage. In the second place, there is some reason to believe that in the first stage itself the conception has two aspects which differ from each other at least as much as Thiele's second and third stages. And finally, if we recognize two main forms instead of three, we can correlate these two — as was suggested in Chapter I — with the conceptions of receptivity and spontaneity. Thus we should say that Thiele's second and third stages represent a position which Kant reached by starting with the *formal* aspect of human experience, while Thiele's first stage, and a somewhat different phase of it, which we shall point out directly, were gained by starting with the *material* aspect.

It is Kant's wavering as to the relation between the categories and *intellektuelle Anschauung* which justifies us in recognizing two slightly different phases in what Thiele calls the first form of the doctrine.¹ Sometimes he says that the categories would be applicable to intellectual perception, and at other times he seems inclined to deny it. The first view is represented by such passages as the following :

"If I take away . . . all perception from an empirical cognition, there still remains the form of thinking, *i. e.*, the way in which an object is determined for the manifold of a possible perception. Hence the categories have a wider range than sensuous perception, in that they think objects in general, without reference to the special mode (that of sensibility) in which an object may be given. But they do not thereby prove the existence of a larger sphere of objects, because one cannot assume that such objects can be given without presupposing that another kind of perception than the sensuous is possible ; and this presupposition we have no right to make."²

"If we wished to apply the categories to objects that are not regarded as phenomena, we should have to assume another perception than the sensuous. . . . Now since such a one, *i. e.*, the intellectual perception, lies quite outside our faculty of cognition,

¹ As a matter of convenience, we shall consider this, which we have just stated as our second point against Thiele, before taking up the first.

² A, 253 f. ; B, 309.

the use of the categories cannot possibly extend beyond the boundary of objects of experience."¹

"The categories . . . do not presuppose any determinate mode of perception (possible merely for us human beings), such as perception in space and time, which is sensuous. They are merely thought-forms for the concept of an object of perception in general, of whatever kind it may be, even though it be a supersensuous perception, of which we cannot form any definite concept."²

These passages certainly suggest that there is nothing in the nature of the categories which would prevent our applying them to intellectual perception. We cannot so use them, because we are not capable of intellectual perception; but if such perception were possible for us, we could apply our categories to it and thus gain a knowledge of things as they really are. On the other hand, however, there are several passages in the *Kritik* in which the applicability of the categories to *intellektuelle Anschauung* is denied. "If by merely intelligible objects we mean things which are thought through pure categories, without any *schema* of sensibility, this kind of objects is impossible. For the condition of the objective use of all our concepts of the understanding is merely the mode of our sensuous perception, through which objects are given to us; and if we abstract from this perception, the categories have no reference to any object. Even if one wished to assume another kind of perception than this sensuous one of ours, our functions of thinking would have no meaning with reference to it. If [on the other hand] we understand [by intelligible objects] simply objects of a non-sensuous perception, for which indeed our categories are not valid and of which therefore we can never have any cognition, . . . noumena in this merely negative sense must certainly be admitted. . . . But in this case the concept of a noumenon is problematic."³ And again: "The pure concepts of the understanding . . . apply to objects of perception in general, whether or not it is like our per-

¹ B, 308.

² *Über die Fortschritte der Metaphysik* (1791), H, VIII, 533. Cf. also *Prolegomena*, § 34, H, IV, 64 f.

³ A, 286; B, 342 f.

ception, provided only that it is sensuous and not *intellectual*.”¹

We find, then, definite statements for each of these opposed views. On the one hand, Kant seems to say that the categories would be applicable to a non-sensuous perception if this perception were itself possible for us. On the other, he declares with equal definiteness that with reference to such a perception they would have no meaning. Thiele explains this apparent contradiction by supposing that the denial of the applicability of the categories belongs only to a later form of the doctrine, in which *intellektuelle Anschauung* is regarded as creating its own object.² In the first stage, when intellectual perception was conceived as a faculty to which objects are given in their real nature, Kant held that it is subject to the categories; it was only when he abandoned this point of view for a higher one, when the notion of creative activity was substituted for that of passive apprehension, that he ceased to believe in the applicability of the categories. That there are, however, passages in which he denies their applicability and which at the same time suggest his earlier conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung*, Thiele readily admits.³ But he explains this by supposing that a doctrine which really holds only of the intellectual perception of the second stage is thoughtlessly carried over by Kant to that of the first stage.

It seems to me that a more satisfactory explanation than this is possible. Instead of maintaining that Kant's denial of the applicability of the categories has its source in his new concep-

¹ B, 148. Cf. with these passages from the *Kritik*, the following from the treatise, *Über eine Entdeckung* (1790): If we had intellectual perception, “not only should we no longer have need of the categories, but they . . . could not be used at all” (H., VI, 32).

² *Op. cit.*, 40 ff.

³ Perhaps more readily than he is really compelled to do. While I myself believe that some of the passages which deny the applicability of the categories represent the first form of the doctrine of *intellektuelle Anschauung*, it seems to me that there is room for difference of opinion upon this very point. The passages in question—the chief of which have just been quoted—do not unmistakably suggest the earlier conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung*; i. e., they contain no distinct reference to the knowledge of things-in-themselves, and they do not speak of objects as *given* in intellectual perception. On the other hand, it may be said that they contain no reference to intellectual perception as creative activity, and also that the context seems to suggest that it is conceived as the apprehension of things-in-themselves. On the whole I incline to think with Thiele that these passages represent the first form of the doctrine.

tion of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as creative activity, we may attribute it simply to the natural development of his earlier doctrine of intellectual perception as the immediate apprehension of things-in-themselves. It has frequently been pointed out that he came to believe in the subjectivity of time and space before he conceived the idea that the categories also are subjective forms. During this period, then, when he still regarded the categories as valid for things-in-themselves, it is not strange that he should have thought of intellectual perception as subject to the categories, that he should have conceived it as differing from our sensuous perception merely in being free from the limitations of space and time, not in being free from the categories. But later, when he had come to regard even the pure conceptions of the understanding as forms of human cognition, his view underwent some change. If the content of intellectual perception were brought under the subjective forms of our understanding, it would no longer represent things as they are in themselves. Hence, if there is any faculty that can know the real nature of things, it must be one which does not employ categories, which does not arrange and unify its content, which in fact has no activity, but is mere passive apprehension of noumena. Thus the belief that intellectual perception, in the earlier form of the doctrine, could not be subject to categories, is not, as Thiele supposes, a foreign element thrust into the conception, but is rather the result to which we naturally come if we start with the thought of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as pure receptivity and carry it out to its logical conclusion.

Even in its higher phase, however, the notion is full of difficulty. As long as intellectual perception is regarded as receptivity, as long as its content is supposed to be given to it from without, it cannot strictly be said to know things in their real nature. For things-in-themselves, things apart from the mind that apprehends them, cannot be constituted just as they are when apprehended. It is only when the knowing mind is one with the known object, when, in Kant's words, "the objects themselves . . . are produced"¹ through the apprehension of

¹ B, 145.

them, that we can be said to know them as they really are. But this, though Kant did not see it, does away at once with the notion of an object which exists independently of a subject. Only by means of a conception which completely overthrows the doctrine of the *Ding an sich*, can we understand the possibility of knowledge of the *Ding an sich*.

Thus the difficulties in the notion of intellectual perception as pure receptivity pave the way for the theory that it is pure spontaneity. That these perplexities had something to do with the development of the second doctrine in Kant's mind seems not improbable;¹ but that he clearly recognized the inadequacy of the first theory and deliberately set out to formulate a better one, as Thiele appears to think, is hardly likely. What really happened, was probably something like this: that while Kant was writing the First Edition of the *Kritik* he conceived *intellektuelle Anschauung* as receptivity and therefore described it as the apprehension of the thing-in-itself; and that afterwards, when he was working out the Second Edition, with its detailed treatment of the transcendental unity of apperception, he quite naturally approached the problem from the point of view of spontaneity, and described intellectual perception as the pure self-consciousness which develops its content from within instead of receiving it from without.² But we need not suppose that the formulation of this second conception brought with it the abandonment of the first. On the contrary, the cruder form seems to have persisted side by side with the more developed one, so that whenever Kant looked at the question from the point of view of sense in-

¹ The following passage from § 9 of the *Prolegomena* suggests that he sometimes recognized the fact that mere passive apprehension of objects can never be knowledge of their real nature: "If our perception had to be of such kind that it represented things as they are in themselves, there would be no perception *a priori*, but it would all be empirical. For I can know what is contained in the object in itself only if the object is present to me, is given. Even then it is indeed incomprehensible how the perception of a present thing should make me know it as it is in itself, since its properties cannot wander over into my consciousness (*Vorstellungskraft*)" (H., IV, 31).

² I do not mean to imply that there are no traces of the conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as spontaneity earlier than the Second Edition. On the contrary, as we shall soon see, the germs of the doctrine appear in the *Inauguraldissertation* of 1770; but it was not until the Second Edition of the *Kritik* that the thought was really worked out.

stead of understanding, he fell naturally and unconsciously into the earlier way of thinking.

This seems to be the more reasonable view of the matter. Kant's second conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung* can better be explained as an attempt to surmount the dualism of form and content by starting with the notion of pure self-consciousness than as a deliberate effort to improve upon the first conception. Evidence for this interpretation is found in the fact that definite statements of the earlier and cruder doctrine appear in works which were written later than the Second Edition of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*.¹ If we supposed that Kant had definitely abandoned the first form of his theory when he developed the second, we should hardly be able to explain this persistence of the earlier form.

In the second conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung* we may perhaps distinguish two phases, as we did in the first. If so, they correspond to Thiele's second and third stages. According to his interpretation, the intellectual perception of the second stage is regarded as form which creates its own content, as a faculty of cognition through which the object itself is produced. But the content is still something external to the form, and thus we have not yet reached the conception of a perfect unity of subject and object. In the third stage, however, Kant develops the thought of a consciousness in which this harmony is complete.

Some of the passages which most naturally suggest Thiele's second stage belong to a period earlier than that of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. In the *Inauguraldissertation* of 1770, *e. g.*, Kant says, "The *perception* of our mind is always *passive*, and thus it is possible only in so far as something is able to affect our senses. But the *divine perception*, which is the cause (*principium*) of objects, not their effect (*principiatum*), since it is independent, is the archetype, and hence completely intellectual."² Again, in a letter to Marcus Herz, in 1772, he writes, "If that which in us is called representation (*Vorstellung*) were in regard to the object an action (*actio*), *i. e.*, if the object were produced

¹ Cf., *e. g.*, the passage in the *Fortschritte der Metaphysik*, quoted above, p. 125. See also H., V, 421 f. (*Kritik der Urtheilskraft*).

² H., II, 404.

through it, in the sense in which the cognitions of the divine mind are represented as the archetypes of things (*Urbilder der Sachen*), then the conformity of the representation with the object could be understood. Thus the possibility of the *intellectus archetypus*, in whose perception the things themselves have their ground, . . . is at least intelligible."¹

We find a somewhat similar statement in the Second Edition of the *Kritik*. Our "mode of perception . . . is called sensibility because it is not original, *i. e.*, it is not a perception through which the existence of the object of perception is given (this kind of perception, so far as we can see, can belong only to the Divine Being); but it is dependent upon the existence of the object and therefore is possible only because the subject's consciousness (*Vorstellungsfähigkeit*) is affected by the object." It is "sensibility . . . because it is derived (*intuitus derivativus*), not original (*intuitus originarius*), and hence not intellectual perception."²

According to Thiele these passages show that Kant has not yet risen to the conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as a perfect unity of subject and object. Things are indeed produced through the activity of the divine understanding, but they are, as it were, projected from it, externalized. Although they are wholly dependent upon it for their being, although they are products of its own nature, still they are, in a sense, foreign to it. The conception which Thiele distinguishes from this and regards as the third stage in the development of the doctrine, is not found earlier than the Second Edition of the *Kritik*. The following passages illustrate it:

"That understanding through whose self-consciousness the manifold of perception was also given — an understanding through whose idea (*Vorstellung*) the objects of this idea existed at the same time — would not need for the unity of its consciousness a special act of the synthesis of the manifold."³

"The consciousness of self (or apperception) is the simple idea (*Vorstellung*) of the Ego; and if through it alone all the manifold in the subject were given *by self-activity*, then the inner perception would be intellectual."⁴

¹ H., VIII, 689.² B, 72.³ B, 138 f.⁴ B, 68, quoted above, p. 7.

That these two sets of passages represent two distinct conceptions of *intellektuelle Anschauung* does not seem to me so evident as it apparently does to Thiele. Of the three quotations which we have given as representative of Thiele's second stage, that found in the letter to Herz is the only one which seems to me to suggest his interpretation at all definitely;¹ but when we have once made this interpretation of the passage in the letter, it is natural enough to extend it to the statements which we have quoted from the *Inauguraldissertation* and the *Kritik*.

On the whole I should be inclined to say that the earlier set of passages represents simply a theory which Kant had inherited from other thinkers and which he had not yet fully made his own. Previously to the great development of the conception of the transcendental unity of apperception in the Second Edition of the *Kritik*, he either regarded *intellektuelle Anschauung* as pure receptivity, or if he thought of it as spontaneity, merely adopted without much reflection the conventional notion of the divine understanding as creative. It was only when he began to work upon the Second Edition that the conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as creative really became an integral part of his own thought. When this took place, the old doctrine of the relation between the created thing and the creative understanding received new significance; then for the first time, Kant saw what is meant by the perfect harmony of subject and object. In the thought of a self-consciousness which does not create, but is its own object, he at last reached the notion of a form that is completely one with its content.

But while we may recognize this difference between the two conceptions of the creative understanding, it seems to me a mistake to emphasize it as strongly as Thiele does. Apparently Kant himself did not discriminate very clearly between them. This is not surprising; for as soon as we ask ourselves what

¹ *I. e.*, it is the only one which seems to imply that the object produced by the activity is yet set over against the perceiving subject; and unless the passages in question suggest this, we have no sufficient ground for recognizing Thiele's second stage as distinct from his third.

² This seems to be indicated by the presence in the Second Edition of the passage which we quoted on the preceding page.

we mean by saying that intellectual perception creates its own object and knows this object perfectly, we see that the only thing which can be meant, is that it is one with its object. We can perhaps form the notion of a creative faculty which projects objects from itself by an unconscious activity and hence regards them as given to it from without. But such a faculty would not be intellectual perception. For if it regarded the object as something foreign, it would fail to apprehend its true nature; things would be distorted by this mode of conceiving them. Only in that creative form which is one with its content, in whose apprehension of the object there is no sense of foreignness or givenness, do we find the ideal of cognition.

Thus the doctrine that intellectual perception creates its own object, contains by implication the thought that in it the dualism of subject and object is resolved into perfect unity. Whether Kant himself clearly saw this, may perhaps be doubted; but it cannot be denied that the more developed form of the doctrine is implicit in the cruder one. Nor can we fail to see that this conception of perfect knowledge could have been reached only by starting from the side of spontaneity. If we try to frame the ideal on the analogy of sense rather than that of understanding, we can never get beyond the notion of a faculty which mirrors its object perfectly, and yet can never be perfect knowledge because it mirrors the object instead of being it. And again, if we frame our notion on the analogy of spontaneity, and yet have in mind the spontaneity of consciousness rather than that of self-consciousness, it is doubtful whether we shall rise higher than the concept of an unconscious creative activity. It is only when we think of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as analogous to our own self-consciousness that we get the true conception, which, in all the various phases of his theory, Kant was struggling to grasp.

To sum up in a few words the result of this discussion, there are two objections to Thiele's interpretation. One is that we seem to have no very good reason for recognizing three main stages, rather than two, in the development of Kant's doctrine. For in the first place, the difference between Thiele's second and third stages is not so marked as that between the conception of

intellektuelle Anschauung as activity and the conception of it as receptivity. And in the second place, we have seen that even the doctrine of intellectual perception as receptivity appears in two somewhat different forms. It seems to me therefore much better to distinguish two main stages in the development of the doctrine, and then to recognize within each of them two slightly different phases. This interpretation has the further advantage that it enables us to correlate our two main stages with the conceptions of receptivity and spontaneity — conceptions whose opposition constitutes a distinctive feature of Kant's philosophy.

The other objection is that Thiele apparently regards each stage in the development of the doctrine as representing a definite abandonment of the preceding stage. This seems to me quite incompatible with the fact that in some of Kant's late writings we find passages which suggest the earlier, rather than the later, form of the doctrine. It is more nearly correct to say that Kant never sharply distinguished between the two forms, and that whenever, in his later writings, he looked at the question from the point of view of receptivity, he went back quite naturally to the cruder conception of *intellektuelle Anschauung* as the passive apprehension of things-in-themselves.

NOTE B.

KANT'S 'I THINK.'

Thiele's contention that Kant regards human knowing as differing from its ideal merely in degree, is supported by a long and somewhat involved argument,¹ which we can notice only briefly. Its thesis seems to be that while Kant denies all content to the pure Ego of apperception, he nevertheless makes it an identity of knowing and being and thus in some measure the realization of the ideal of knowledge. In a passage in the Second Edition of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Kant declares that the 'I' in the 'I think' is something real and yet is neither phenomenon nor thing-in-itself.² This passage is regarded by Thiele as supporting his interpretation. He lays stress upon the fact that the Ego is here designated as an intellectual representation (*intellektuelle Vorstellung*). Kant does not give it the name of intellectual perception, he says, partly because 'perception' is associated in his mind with the notion of a manifold, partly because he ordinarily thinks of perception as subject to the categories, and most of all because the term 'intellectual perception' has

¹ *Op. cit.*, 94-172.

² "The 'I think' is . . . an empirical proposition and contains within itself the proposition 'I exist.' . . . It expresses an undetermined empirical perception (*Anschauung*), that is, sense-perception (*Wahrnehmung*) — and hence it shows that sensation, which of course belongs to sensibility, forms the ground of this existential proposition — but it precedes experience. . . . An undetermined sense-perception (*Wahrnehmung*) signifies here only something real which has been given, and indeed only to thinking in general; which therefore is given, not as phenomenon and not as thing-in-itself (*Sache an sich selbst*) or noumenon, but as something which exists in fact and which is indicated as such [*i. e.*, as factual existence] in the proposition 'I think.' For it should be noted that when I characterize the proposition 'I think,' as empirical, I do not mean thereby to say that the 'I' in this proposition is an empirical representation; on the contrary it is purely intellectual, because it belongs to thinking in general. But without any empirical representation to furnish matter for thinking, the act 'I think' would not take place, and the empirical factor is [therefore] only the condition of the application or use of the pure intellectual faculty" (B, 422 f.). With this we may compare the following: "The consciousness of myself in the representation 'I' is not perception, but a merely *intellectual* representation of the self-activity of a thinking subject" (B, 278).

for him "a decided reference to the Creator." But we can see in this description of the pure Ego the essential characteristic of intellectual perception — the complete "identity of knowing and being." The 'I' in the 'I think' is not phenomenal, because "that which is indicated in the representation 'I' is not something distinct from the representation, something of which the representation could be the appearance." On the other hand, it is not thing-in-itself, because it has no content, and especially because it rises above the opposition of phenomenon and thing-in-itself. The thing-in-itself can never be an object of knowing. But in this act 'I' the "being of the Ego in itself" is not present as an *Ansich*, "just *because* it is illuminated by knowing."¹

Another passage which Thiele regards as furnishing strong evidence for his theory is found in a note to § 46 of the *Prolegomena*, which reads as follows: "If the representation of apperception, the 'I,' were a concept, by which something were thought, it could be used as predicate of other things or would contain such predicates. But it is nothing more than a feeling of existence (*Gefühl eines Daseins*), without the least concept; it is only the representation of that to which all thinking stands in relation (in the relation of accident)."² In this "feeling of existence," Thiele urges, we have that unity of knowing and being which is the essence of absolute knowing. "In the act of thought 'I' is immediately contained the existence of the Ego as a feeling; at bottom this means nothing else than that the act 'I' is identity of knowing and being."³

The force of Thiele's argument is decidedly weakened when we consider the context of the passages upon which he lays so much stress. Both the quotation from the *Kritik* and that from the *Prolegomena* appear as foot-notes in a discussion of the paralogisms of pure reason. In each case, Kant is protesting against our supposing that the pure consciousness of self is a source of knowledge. The 'I think' is purely empty, form without any content; whatever Kant may have meant by speaking of it as "intellektuelle Vorstellung" or as "*Gefühl eines Daseins*," he certainly did not mean to describe it as a unity of form and

¹ *Op. cit.*, 143 ff.² H, IV, 82, note.³ *Op. cit.*, 139.

matter. The general criticism may be made upon Thiele's whole argument, that it tries to read into Kant a theory which is certainly not in Kant. It is perfectly true that the doctrine of the transcendental Ego suggests to us the way in which its fundamental defects may be corrected, but it is equally true that Kant himself refuses to make the correction. We know that some one, coming after him, conceived the idea of trying to show that human experience, in its inmost essence, must be that very unity of form and content which is the ideal of all its striving. This is what Fichte and Hegel attempted to do, but it is precisely in this direction that they went beyond anything that Kant ever dreamed of. In short the spirit of the *Kritik* compels Kant to maintain that, so far as we can ever know, the dualism of form and matter is absolute. We may frame a vague notion of some superhuman understanding for which this opposition does not exist; but this intellectual perception must always be, not merely an unrealizable ideal, but an ideal to which our cognition cannot even approximate.

In justice to Thiele it should be said that to a certain extent he seems to recognize this. The quotation from the *Prolegomena* he speaks of as "a flash of light, whose gleam has no further influence in Kant's *conscious* philosophizing."¹ Nevertheless, he believes that the unconscious influence of this momentary insight is seen in the Second Edition of the *Kritik*, and he obviously regards the passage as indicating that Kant sometimes caught glimpses of the truth, that our own self-consciousness is, in a sense, that very unity of subject and object which we posit as the ideal. This, it seems to me, is far from being the case. One thing of which Kant seems always certain—in the Second Edition as in the First—is that for human knowledge the ideal is essentially and utterly inaccessible.

¹ *Op. cit.*, 140.

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